THE PLAYSTATION 3 MAGAZINE

PSM3

April 2007
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UEFA Champions League
Burnout Dominator
Sonic The Hedgehog
Def Jam: Icon
God Of War 2
F.E.A.R.

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SKATE

GRIND THEFT AUTO: EA's city-thrashing Hawk-beater exposed

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PSM3 Start

"Flip open the box and savour the moment"

Games. Movies. Music. Online play. Downloadable content. Six-dimensional control. Crystal clear Blu-ray hi-definition... the list goes on, but for all the many reasons we're excited about PS3, the best, surely, is the idiot-grin Christmas-morning glee of opening the box. Worst? Cleaning those b*st*rd fingerprints but, hey, that's why you're reading PSM3 because, like us, you give a damn about the little details. Our incredible 16-page PS3 launch feature kicks off on page 44. We can't wait to hear what you make of Sony's console on www.psm3mag.com. But don't retire your PS2 yet – *God of War II* (page 62) proves there's life in the six-year-old machine yet. Just another small reason to be so daftly confident about the future of PS3...

Daniel Dawkins Editor
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

In the making of this issue of PSM3...
157 angry phone calls
14 fresh Skate screens
Several late nights, one PS3 launch
aaaand... relax

The PSM3 Promise

The sharpest opinions
Every bit of the magazine is dedicated to giving you more information. If we're worried that a feature in a game isn't working, we'll not only tell you about it, but we'll have a word with the developer too.

The biggest games
Fact is, if a game makes it into the pages of PSM3 then it's something worth knowing about. PSM3 says no to lazy page fillers and boring 'me too' games.

The richest detail
We finish every game we review. Our secrets are the result of us playing the game and finding them ourselves. We've got what you want to know and tell you how you want to hear it.

The most committed videogame mag team
The PSM3 team live and breathe PlayStation. There's no game we haven't played and there's no end to our quest for knowledge and gaming greatness.

The best DVD action
We've got the best DVD in the business. We cram it with the best PS3, PS2 and PSP games each and every month. For free.

Three to read first...

"It's the hidden PS3 manual. Be a power user in minutes."
Get the most out of your PS3 with **our power user guide** – page 48

"Another of PS2's last-minute gems."
Read our review of **God of War 2** – page 62

"It favours pseudo-stylish visuals over a game that actually works."
Read our shocking **Def Jam: Icon** verdict – page 74

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The PlayStation 3 Magazine

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PS3's out... now (ish) – read the latest news right here.

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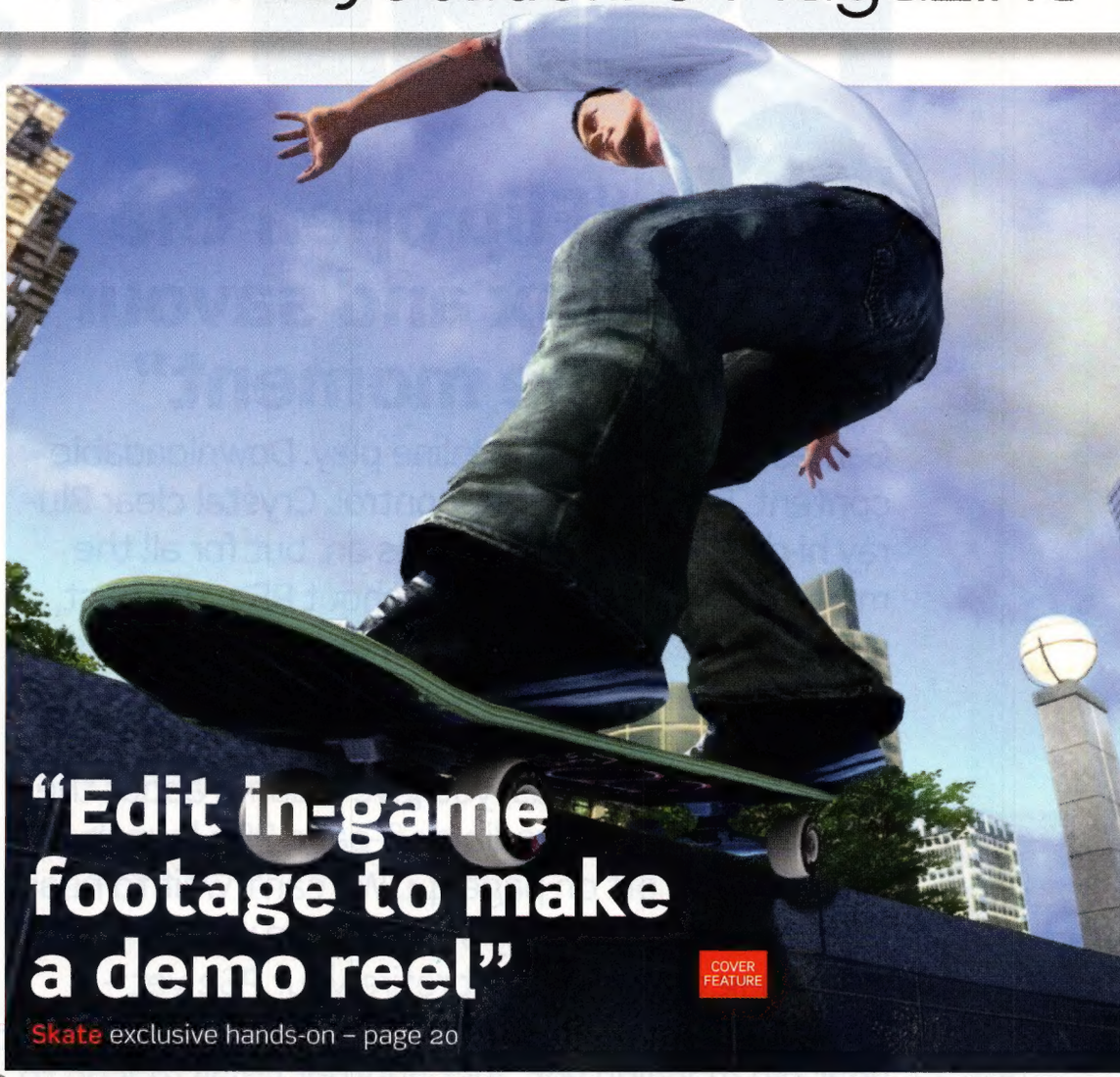

"Edit in-game footage to make a demo reel"

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Playing PlayStation longer, harder, deeper.

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The weirdest outfits you can find in *SSX3* exposed for your pleasure.

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Sony's PlayStation 3 ad campaign unveiled. Email us those puzzled responses... now.

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"A curious mix of old and new *Burnouts*"

But **Burnout Dominator** hits some rocky terrain along its journey – page 80

See GTA: Vice City Stories on page 68

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PS3 Launch Special

Every PS3 launch game is on this disc – plus key online PS Store titles – From *Resistance* to *MotorStorm*, *Virtua Fighter 5* to *Godfather: Don's Edition* and beyond. Getting a PS3? You need to watch this disc.

Def Jam Icon

We'd been expecting great things of *Icon*, but – as you'll see if you turn to page 74 – it's not quite the genre re-defining brawler we'd hoped for. To put it mildly. Watch the trailer, but don't expect too much from the actual game.

Blacksite: Area 51

Midway's PS3 sequel to overlooked PS2 first-person shooter *Area 51* is, crudely, a bit like *Call of Duty* with aliens, allying monster set pieces with tactical squad AI. One to watch – now, and in the future.

Free King Of The Hill episode

And here's a special treat – an entire episode from season five of King Of The Hill, featuring Hank unsure whether to vote for George Bush after finding out he has a weak handshake. Watch.

+ Stranglehold | **F.E.A.R.** | Timeo | **NBA Street Homecourt** | Virtua Tennis 3 | **Burnout Dominator** | MGS4 | **Ratchet: Size Matters** | Oblivion | **Full Auto 2** | More

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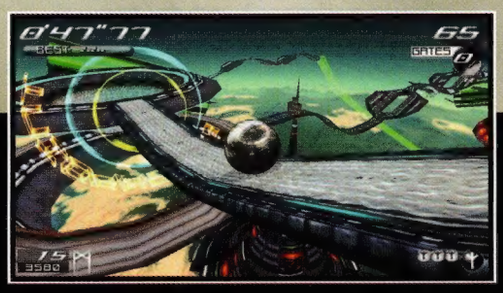

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Frontline

Hard news, all PlayStation acti

PS3 UK LAUNCH

Where can you still buy a PlayStation 3?

Stores claim record pre-orders – but you might still snap one up...

Sony's PS3 is on-sale in a few days but what happens if you haven't pre-ordered yours yet? Have they all sold out? Well, that's quite a question – but it *may* not be too late to get one.

You see, according to Sony and many retailers, PlayStation 3 is garnering phenomenal amounts of pre-orders and Europe's initial allocation of about a million units is rapidly decreasing. Play.com's head of games Gian Luzio claims it's "the most pre-ordered console yet" and Sony have backed this up by saying "Woolworths, Amazon and Play, to name a few, are reporting record-breaking pre-orders and an overwhelming demand for PS3." Indeed, Woolies claimed that, during the second week of February, it took one PS3 pre-order *every 20 seconds*. That's a hell of a claim. "It's the hottest gaming system since the PS2 launched in 2000," says Woolworth's head of games, Gerry Berkley. "Demand will outstrip supply."

But is that true? That's not what our investigations show. On March 1st, every high street retailer or major website claimed to have PS3s available to sell, with Game still guaranteeing a launch day delivery. At the time of writing, Virgin Megastores, hasn't even been told how many units to expect from Sony, yet it will still take a £50 deposit from you. Of those that *wouldn't* guarantee us a machine on launch day, many still claimed they'd get us one around the time. Woolies promised us a machine "within two weeks of the launch date", while Argos' website uses the ominous phrase "delivery from March 23". Play.com, meanwhile, is saying your PS3 "should be dispatched for delivery on launch day" meaning, therefore, you won't actually get your console until a couple of days later.

So what's going on? Two possibilities spring to mind. The first is that the shops are lying about how well they're doing in order to try and hurry those still thinking of pre-ordering into actually doing so. The

What to get...

Want our opinion on where to pre-order? Well, that play.com bundle is very tempting – what with that HDMI lead thrown in – and if they can deliver on time then it'd be near perfect. Just make sure to flog Genji on eBay. If not that, Gamestation's 'plus any game' deal looks pretty good too.

second, and more likely, is that none of the shops actually know their allocation of PS3s just yet and will continue to take your money until they have sold out of units – and one million's a lot of PS3's to share out, so they're probably making a fairly safe gamble about their stock levels. Still, it isn't going to be very nice for you if they've overestimated their allocation and are forced to delay sending you your PS3 until they get some more stock – and who, aside from Sony, knows when that will be?

Should you try and pre-order? Yes. If you want a PS3 – and if you're reading this mag, you probably do – then pre-ordering will still be the quickest way to achieve that. At least if you've pre-ordered, you know you're going to get your machine *eventually*. And even if shops get more stock than they expected, or demand isn't as high as Sony make out, you're onto a winner.

Retail The big PS3 pre-order chart

All details correct as of 1st March 2007, but check company website for updates

	GAME	gamestation	HMV	PLAY.COM	WOOLWORTHS	Currys.
Taking pre-orders?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deposit?	£100 (unless through game.co.uk)	£20	£100	X	X	£100
Bundles?	With Resistance and MotorStorm, £504.97	£460 with any game.	X	MotorStorm, Genji, Resistance and an HDMI lead(£525)	Resistance (£465) F1 & Motorstorm (£495)	Ridge 7 (£464.99) CoD3 and VF5 (£514.97)
Launch day delivery?	Guaranteed.	"Depends where you are in the queue."	Depends on the queue.	Dispatched on launch day.	"Within two weeks of launch date."	"Unlikely."

ON THE DISC
PS3 launch games reviewed on the disc this month

The Opinionator

"Sony are losing the PR war... but it's easy to solve"

A brief click around the countless online games sites, blogs and aggregators suggests a startling conclusion – the internet hates Sony. Why? It's partly down to Microsoft, who – it's widely rumoured – 'employ' folk/bloggers to post anti-Sony propganda, as if they needed any encouragement. There's also the *small* matter of Sony's constant setbacks, from the mutiple PS3 delays to the high UK price (we actually pay more for less, now the PS2 compatibility chip has been taken out) and the inability to secure AAA exclusives. But that's not what we're angry about – it's how Sony have chosen to respond.

Blog standard?

Once the masters of understated cool, Sony has jumped on the viral marketing/blog bandwagon with shameless zeal. Sony's attempt to create an 'unofficial' PSP fan site (www.alliwantforchristmasisapsp.com) was rapidly outed as a desperate Sony fake and ridiculed by *real* fan sites. Sony then launched the 'semi-official' fan blog www.threespeech.com – a depressing, barely veiled propaganda tool hiding under the illusion of independence. And what happens when we print our 48% scoring *F1* (PS3) review on www.psm3mag.com? A 'blogger' (*not* a developer/product manager/PR person, oh no), appears instantly to ridicule its factual inaccuracies with suspiciously in-depth knowledge of the 'product'.

How to win?

What Sony and many games companies seem to have forgotten is what generates positive word of mouth among 'opinion forming' blogs/fan sites in the first place. That's right: Good news and *good* games. Positive PR is a natural by-product of quality, and not an end in itself.

Dan Dawkins

Myth-Buster

SEEN THIS?

All your old PS2 games will run on a UK PS3

THE TRUTH

Well, actually, no they won't – not at first. Sony, in their wisdom, have decided to remove the chip from the European model that allows many of your PS2 games to run on PS3. Apparently this is a *good* thing as well, with Sony stating that they'll now have more time to focus on creating shiny new games for your PS3 without the burden of backwards compatibility looming over its head. *Riiight*. But it's not all doom and gloom. Sony have at least promised to deliver some PS2 support through a combination of hardware and software simulation. So what does that mean for you? Well, basically, if you log onto http://faq.eu.playstation.com/bc on March 23, you'll be able to check which PS2 games are compatible with PS3. So cheer up, eh?

Thrill List

The latest news on PlayStation's hottest games, every issue

1 Star Wars: The Force Unleashed

May the, erm, wood be with you

LucasArts has released two new videos to demonstrate its Euphoria engine – recently licenced by Rockstar for *GTA4*. The vids (look on You Tube) display revolutionary physics, as Stormtroopers are chucked about using the force, breaking bits of wood into a million pieces in real-time. The most impressive aspect of the videos is how the wood splinters and shatters a different way every time, depending on the size of the object and where the impact is made. Advanced wood physics – *that's* what next-gen's all about.

Pub LucasArts | **Dev** LucasArts | **ETA** November

"Run up a tank barrel and jump the driver"
Mercenaries PS3 page 15

"Wood physics – that's what next-gen's all about"

Feel the force *The Force Unleashed* looks spectacular, but given the track record of Star Wars games, we'll see...

2 Transformers: The Game

You're never too old

The game based on Michael Bay's forthcoming robot movie – headed for PS3 and PS2 – is being created by *Lego Star Wars* developer Traveller's Tales, and gives you the chance to control both the Autobots and the Decepticons. Scheduled for a July release to coincide with the film, it will let players use a variety of objects – such as lamp-posts, cars and buses – to wreak havoc. Think *Hulk: Ultimate Destruction*. A PSP version is also in the works.

Pub Activision | **Dev** Traveller's Tales | **ETA** July

3 Ratchet And Clank Future: Tools Of Destruction

A smutty pun and a new Ratchet

It's been almost a year since we saw the teaser trailer for *Ratchet* PS3, in which the camera flew around their home planet of Veldin. At last Insomniac has leaked a few details. "The name *Tools Of Destruction*," says Brian Allgeier, Insomniac's design director, "works on many levels. It signals a new era for the franchise, ties into the game's story and includes one of our signature double entendres." As soon as anything else happens, we'll tell you.

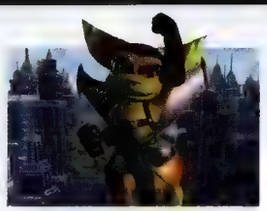
Pub Sony | **Dev** Insomniac | **ETA** 2008

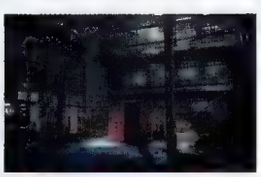
4 Half-Life 2

With loads of extras

Get *Half-Life 2* and not only do you get the original game, but additional missions *Episode One* and *Episode Two*, puzzle game *Portal* and online multi-player epic *Team Fortress 2*. If you've never played *Half-Life 2* before then this is essential, as are both the new episodes; they're shorter than the original, but just as groundbreaking in terms of technology and gameplay.

Pub EA | **Dev** Valve | **ETA** Winter

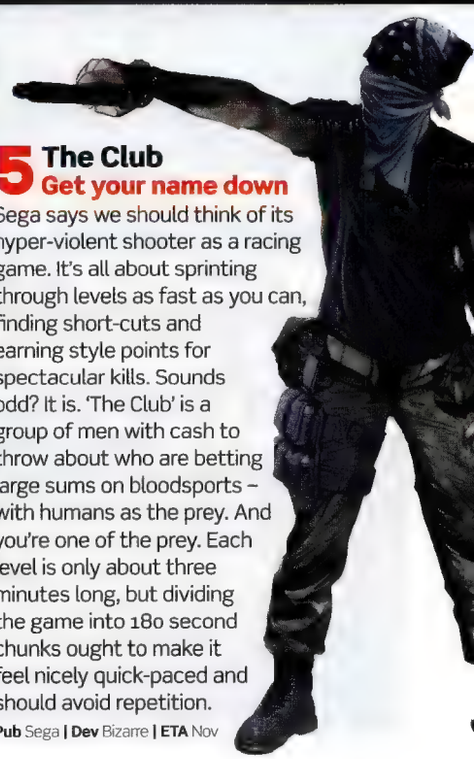




Ratchet PS3 and *Half-Life 2*
Another *Ratchet* game is always good. *Half-Life* looks ace too.

5 The Club

Get your name down



Sega says we should think of its hyper-violent shooter as a racing game. It's all about sprinting through levels as fast as you can, finding short-cuts and earning style points for spectacular kills. Sounds odd? It is. 'The Club' is a group of men with cash to throw about who are betting large sums on bloodsports – with humans as the prey. And you're one of the prey. Each level is only about three minutes long, but dividing the game into 180 second chunks ought to make it feel nicely quick-paced and should avoid repetition.

Pub Sega | **Dev** Bizarre | **ETA** Nov

ON THE DISC

PS3 UPDATE

Is this plain-looking chap the next Lara Croft?

Naughty Dog unveil name of new PS3 project. Clue: It's odd.

Jak and Daxter creator Naughty Dog's 'secret' new game is called *Uncharted: Drake's Fortune*, but their gobby Ottsel mascot and his gruff chum have been bumped in favour of this bloke – who, as these new screens show, has been toughened up since his first appearance at E3 2006. He's like Indiana Jones dressed in Gap khakis, and judging by the E3 trailer, is after famous real-life adventurer Sir Francis Drake's treasure.

That said, there's an obscure book called 'Drake's Fortune' about infamous American confidence trickster Oscar Hartzell, who conned people out of millions of dollars by offering them a share of Sir Francis Drake's lost fortune in the early 1900s. Either way, expect more on this promising *Tomb Raider*-style epic soon.

'OLD' HERO (MAY 2006)

'NEW' HERO (MARCH 2007)

Toughened up The hero's appearance has changed since E3 – think John McClane meets Indiana Jones.

"Don't call me Lara – the name's Drake"

"The whole tilt control thing is rubbish..."
PSM3 rocks the Internet page 17

PS3 UPDATE

'Borrow' high-tech vehicles in Mercenaries 2: World in Flames

The gruff Swedish soldier of fortune hits Venezuela.

The first *Mercenaries* game was praised for how non-linear it was; the life of a mercenary, after all, being rather unrestrained. Now, thanks to the mighty power of PS3, it's even more open-ended and vast. Returning character (1) **Mattias Nilsson** is the only confirmed character so far, although a further three have been announced; a guy and two girls. On Mattias' arms you'll see a frightening number of tattoos. Some of these were actually (2) **designed by fans** of developer Pandemic. You can view the entire gallery on its website at mercs2.com. While in the first game nicking a vehicle was as simple as pushing a button, in the sequel you have to fight your way to the driver's seat via a button-mashing mini-game. In this example, you (3) **run up a tank's barrel** and pounce on the confused driver. Airborne vehicles, however, are a lot more complicated. To 'borrow' one, Mattias fires a grappling hook at its underside (think *Just Cause*), zips up and (4) **pulls the pilot out**, dropping him to his doom. The game is set in a vast area of Venezuela, covered by dense jungle and desert sections dotted with oil fields. To traverse it, there are a number of vehicles at your disposal including (5) **dune buggies**, stealth bombers, motorcycles, tanks and armoured cars. Some can be stolen off the street but others can only be bought and delivered via an air drop.

Matt's tats Pandemic fans designed Nilsson's tattos.

Pub EA | **Dev** Pandemic | **ETA** Winter 2007

The PSM3 Wrong-Righter

EMAIL PSM3 @
Spotted some Bertie Bollax in PSM3? Tell us: psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Rubbing the wax-hot polish of truth over past issues

SONIC ON PS3 – "A CLASSIC" ☒ WRONG

"*Sonic* on PS3 appears to be a massive return to form... We're expecting big things... we're hoping it can be another classic." Well, we've been wrong on these things before, but as page 72 attests, rarely as wrong as this...

PSM 80 page 46

PSM3 Reckons
With its luscious detail and breakneck platforming action, we're hoping *Sonic* PS3 can be another classic. More news soon.

CLASSIC COCK-UP

MANHUNT SEQUEL COMING ☑ RIGHT

In issue 85, we said there would be a surprise sequel to *Manhunt*. Six seconds after we'd hit the shelves (or thereabouts), Rockstar announced there would indeed be a *Manhunt 2* coming to PS2 and PSP. And we can't wait for it.

CAUGHT!

...charge. That's nice of them. Sort of. Parting shot? Wouldn't it be great if Rockstar made a surprise sequel to grisly cult classic **Manhunt** on PS2? Chance would be a fine thing...

PSM 85 page 16

IMPORT TUNES INTO DEF JAM ☒ WRONG

We said you'd be able to do this, and the rhythm of your music would affect your move sets. We were wrong – that feature's exclusive to the Xbox for some reason, but that's what EA told us originally. Mind you, we also thought Icon would be good and we were wrong about that too...

PSM 85 page 15

3 Def Jam: Icon
Make your own kind of music
This just in – apparently you'll be able to import your own songs to use as part of Icon's new fighting system. The rhythm of the music affects your character's move set and the environment around them, so the type music you pick can either help or hinder your performance. One of the developers team uses Sade's '80s hit 'Smooth Operator' as battle track of choice.
ETA March 2007

HIT A BUM NOTE

ON THE DISC
Heavenly Sword is on this month's disc

Seabass

Lovely, slightly grumpy, Pro Evo genius who we adore

What has he done?

Seabass is responsible for the divinely-balaced *PES/ Winning Eleven* series, which has established itself as the only football game among critics and 'real' gamers for over a decade. His rather unusual nickname stems from his love of fishing. Odd? No.

Why we like him?

He's scruffy, unkempt and attended last year's E3 in a suit so out-of-character – probably after a corporate bollocking for always looking a bit 'tired and emotional' – that he looked like he'd been dressed by his mum. Shingo 'Seabass' Takatsuka and his team have repelled FIFA's commercial behemoth from dominating the football market over three console generations, and have robbed us of our lunchtimes since late 2001. *PES* inspires such loyalty, that some fans have written fully-fledged back stories for its motley crew of fictional Master League players. (Ximilez? Porn star. Deffo.) Best of all, Seabass' miserable optimism feels very British: "In the past I said that we have reached 40 per cent of what I wanted PES to be. I actually feel it's much lower than that now."

What's he doing now?

Beavering away on the amusingly titled, *Winning Eleven 11* on PS3 at his KCET studio in Tokyo.

Who are you?
Name Shingo Takatsuka **Age** ?
Role Senior Producer, KCET
Key Games *Winning Eleven, J-League Winning Eleven, Winning Eleven 9 LiveWare Evolution , PES6.*

The Insider

He's the man who knows too much...

Clover, the genius minds behind **Okami** and **Viewtiful Joe**, have formed a new company after being shut down by Capcom. It's called Seeds and the team includes *Okami* producer Atsushi Inaba, *Resident Evil* maestro Shinji Mikami and *Viewtiful Joe* designer Hideki Kamiya. The rest of the Clover team (the few who didn't run off to Seeds) have been put to work on **Resident Evil 5**. Beat-'em-up fans will be glad to know that a **Virtua Fighter Vs. Tekken** game may be on the cards. "I spoke with the director of *Virtua Fighter* and talk of a collaboration came up," said *Tekken* director Haruki Suzaki in a recent interview. "But we believe this decision lies greatly with the fans, so we'd like their opinion." Interested? The scramble for his e-mail address starts here.

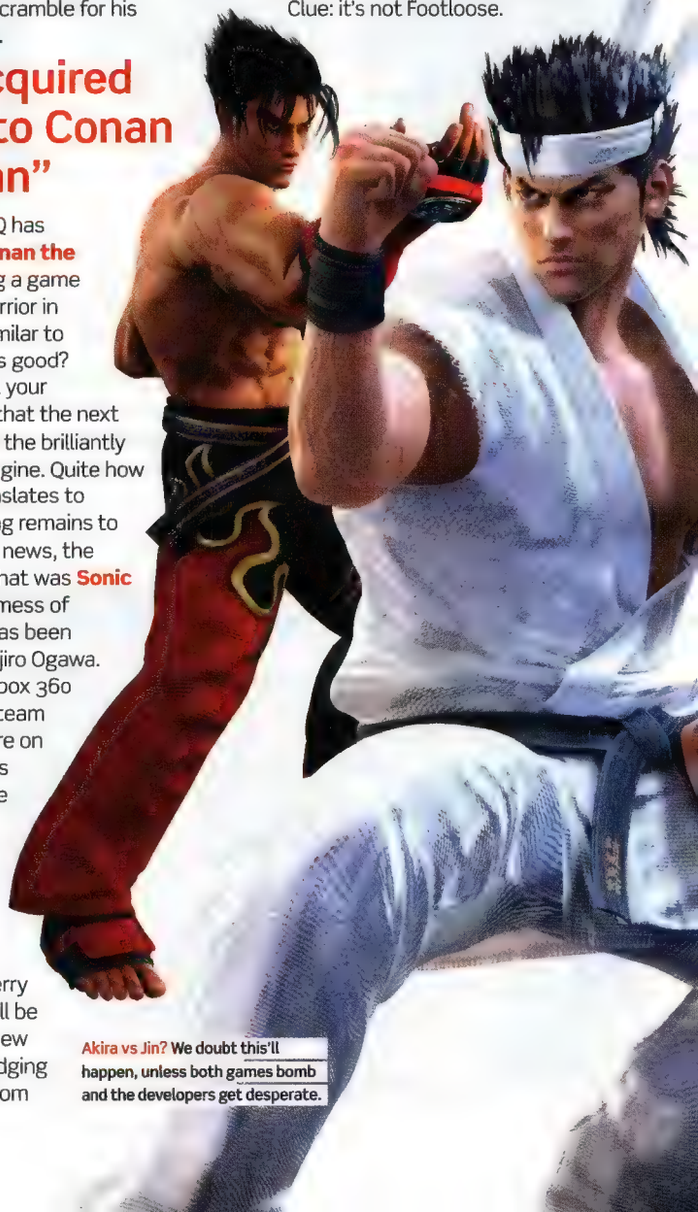
"THQ has acquired the license to Conan the Barbarian"

Retro film fans rejoice; THQ has acquired the license to **Conan the Barbarian**, and is releasing a game based on the muscular warrior in 2008. Apparently it'll be similar to *God of War*. But will it be as good?

Love **WipEout?** It will fill your heart with joy to discover that the next game in the series will use the brilliantly high-tech **MotorStorm** engine. Quite how sloppy off-road racing translates to futuristic anti-gravity racing remains to be seen, however. In other news, the massive disappointment that was **Sonic the Hedgehog** on PS3 (a mess of glitches and bad design) has been defended by its creator Yojiro Ogawa. "We were developing for Xbox 360 at the same time and the team had an awful lot of pressure on them," he explained. "It was hard for us to try and come up with both versions together with one team." Elsewhere, **Prince of Persia** is set for a PS3 sequel and a Hollywood film, helmed by action producer extraordinaire, Jerry Bruckheimer. The game will be the beginning of a whole new saga for the Prince and, judging from concept art leaked from Ubisoft, will have a much darker art style. Crikey. If the Prince gets any darker he'll be a faint shadow in a few games' time.

A handful of new EA PS3 games have just been unveiled at an event running parallel to the Game Developers Conference in San Francisco (March 5 – 9). Among them are epic sci-fi FPS **Crysis**, free-roaming war game **Mercenaries 2: World in Flames** and **The Orange Box** which contains **Half-Life 2**, **HL2: Episode One**, **HL2: Episode Two**, **Portal** and **Team Fortress 2**. More good news for fans of '80s films; a game based on an era-defining film will be appearing on PS3. The publisher won't let me say what though so you'll have to keep on guessing until it's confirmed.

Clue: it's not Footloose.



Akira vs Jin? We doubt this'll happen, unless both games bomb and the developers get desperate.

"Thanks to Sony's cutback, I won't be stuck in the past"
The Optimist page 18

PS3 SPEAK OUT

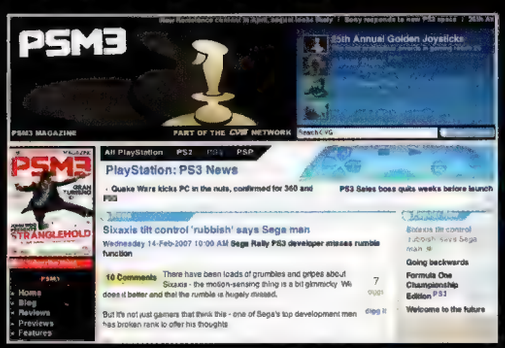
PSM3 rules the internet

How our news exclusive took over the web

Remember our *Sega Rally* preview last month? Head *Rally* producer Guy Wilday said this: "The whole tilt control thing is rubbish... it's no compensation for rumble." We posted the story on our site, www.psm3mag.com, and pretty much every news site repeated our words. Then we posted our 'creator of the Genji crab hates crabs' story, and the same thing happened again.

This proves two things. One, that we're ace. And Two, that everyone is crying out for actual, *human* opinion from the people who make games, and not just PR-line approved waffle. Developers *can* be opinionated given half a chance, but rarely are for fear of getting their knuckles rapped. Except in Japan, it seems, where they're encouraged. If *you* were Konami, would you tell Kojima to 'cheer up' before he finishes *MGS4*?

Free speech Few developers in the west speak out for fear of being rapped.

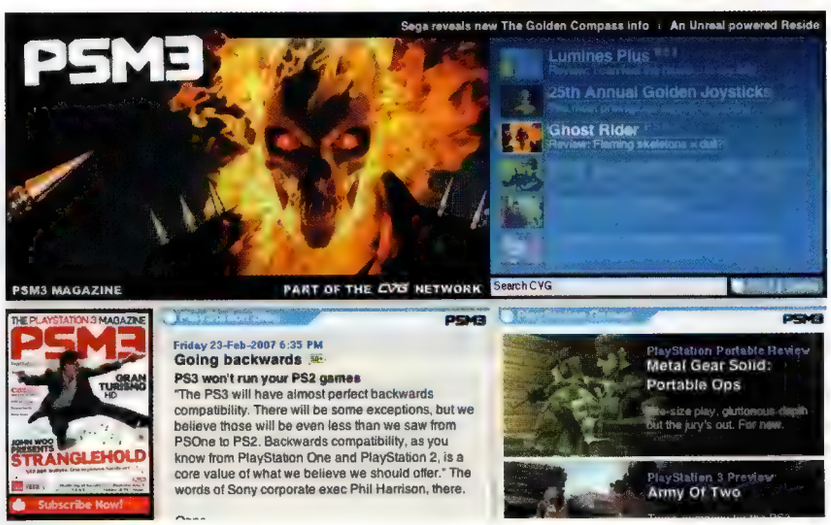


PS3 FORUM

psm3mag.com gets better

Internet rejoices. Quietly.

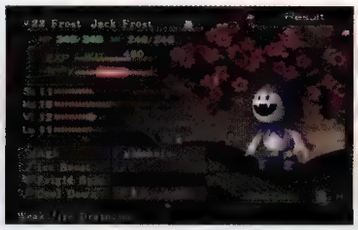
Remember psm3mag.com? It was a blog, pure and simple. And you loved it. But now the website has changed, and – despite some teething problems we blame on Andy *for no reason* – is better than ever. The most important change is that our sister site CVG.com will be updating it with breaking news stories every day, so you'll always be the first with the latest PS3 news. We'll have interviews with developers, game footage, reviews, previews and – as you all asked for it – a forum for you to have your say. Brilliant, eh? Get clicking now.



ON THE DISC
All these games will feature on upcoming discs

The last minute shots of big importance

The freshest pics, squeezed in as we go to press



PS2 Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Summoner PSone RPG returns

Details **Pub** Koei | **Dev** Atlus Software | **Genre** RPG

Lowdown *Devil Summoner* is a spin-off of the role-playing *Shin Megami* series, but is set in early 1900's Japan rather than present day. The result is a Sherlock Holmes-esque detective adventure with some demon summoning thrown in. This PS2 sequel to the Saturn original features action-based combat rather than menu-based. At the heart of game is Raidou Kuzunoha, a detective who able to stun demons, capture them and call upon them in battle. Eat that, Sherlock Holmes.

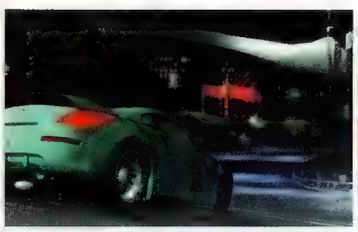
ETA April

PS3 Tekken 6 The Iron Fist Tournament continues...

Details **Pub** Sony | **Dev** Namco | **Genre** Fighting

Lowdown Namco's flagship beat-'em-up will appear first in arcades, using machines based on PS3 technology, so a console version is a mere formality. Two new characters have been confirmed – the rather lightweight, curiously ladylike, Leo and the spider-ish Zafina – and we can expect some surprises in the gameplay, as a recent trailer showed Bryan Fury using a shotgun mid-combo, the tyke. Watch for 1080p *Tekken: Dark Resurrection* on PS Network soon, too.

ETA December



PS3 Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights THQ's street racer gets sweaty.

Details **Pub** THQ | **Dev** Juiced Games | **Genre** Racing

Lowdown THQ have realised that pimped-up hotrods look better at night, and so set their competent street racing game after the watershed. The '*Hot Import Nights*' bit is a actually a license from the HIN auto show that tours the US and combines the wonders of tuner cars, hip-hop and promo girls in small pants. New features include drift or powerslide races, and a Driver DNA feature that tracks gamers' personal driving traits.

ETA Winter

PS2 Superbike World Championship 07 On your bike

Details **Pub** Koch Media | **Dev** Milestone | **Genre** Racing

Lowdown *Superbike World Championship 07* lacks the graphical polish of *Moto GP*, but may offer more authentic handling. All the bikes, tracks and riders are here, but less experienced bikers can play a simple arcade-style racer by switching on all the riding aids. But for that accurate feel of terror at 180mph plus, then switch them all off. We'll have the review next month.

ETA May

The Optimist

Don't worry. Be happy

I'm delighted that not all my PS2 games play on PS3!

Brilliant! When PS3 comes out in Europe it won't have an Emotion Engine in it, meaning that not all PS2 games will be backwards compatible. Not only will this make the console a few grams lighter, but it also means that I can focus on the groundbreaking new PS3 games set for release, like Formula One, Untold Legends: and Gundam: Target in Sight. Forget crappy old retro games like Okami, Final Fantasy XII and God of War 2 – thanks to Sony's cutback, I won't be stuck in the past like some kind of loser. I'll be on the forefront of the next generation. Wahey!

Back to the future

It's great too because Sony won't tell us which games are actually backwards compatible until the day of release, and that's sort of exciting. There's a website up to check – http://faq.eu.playstation.com/bc/ – but it doesn't go live until March 23. It's such a mystery! This also means that I won't sell my PS2 to raise money for PS3, just in case some of my favourite games don't work on the PS3. And anyway, £425 is a steal, so I don't need to offset the cost by selling off my old hardware. Especially seeing how Sony hates the second-hand sale of their goods. Ace.

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PlayStation Portable

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Cover Game

PS3

Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Price £39.99 | **Genre** Sports
FYI Skating goes back to its roots

ON THE DISC

SKATING COMES FULL CIRCLE

How EA'S innovative *Skate* will shame *Tony Hawk* and make you an online movie star...

The world doesn't need two skateboarding games... because, arguably, it hasn't yet got *one*. *Tony Hawk*? The argument among hardcore skaters and disillusioned fans of Activision's franchise is that it stopped being a skateboarding game around *THUG2*, losing sight of the simple thrills of real skating and embracing *Jackass* culture to gloss over its insanely-complicated, obscenely video-gamey controls and swirl of baffling combos. Hardcore *Tony Hawk* players casually toss out 100-trick combos, leaping from towering rails to jagged architecture without a sigh of emotion, while in real-life even the crummiest six-inch leap or scuffed grind can provoke shivers of delight. Ironically enough, the fact isn't lost on EA – the world's biggest, most ill-feted, commercial publisher – whose gritty, open-ended and online-video-sharing *Skate* aims to take skateboarding back to its feelgood roots.

This has been attempted once before, of course. Rockstar's overlooked PSone cult classic *Thrasher* took difficulty to the other extreme, where performing a kickflip was a near-miracle. EA isn't about to make a spiritual follow-up to *Thrasher*, but it *is* tackling a gap (if you'll excuse the pun) in the market for skaters who want a videogame that represents what the sport – sorry, *lifestyle*, itself stands for. While we love the intricate combo-crafting that

Skate

"*Tony Hawk* stopped being a skateboarding game around *THUG2*"

Nollie and big airs Flick the right stick up, then down, to Nollie.

Neversoft's games offer, *Skate* is truer to the sport's roots. The thrill of discovering new terrain, tweaking your tricks to the limit, goofing around or nailing a trick just *right* – board flipping in fluid mathematical symmetry... and landing with your feet flat on the bolts. It's about the smell of tarmac on a hot day. Or the screech of polyurethane as you power-slide down a hill. EA has traditionally made sport larger than life – think *Fight Night*, think *SSX*, or *NBA Street* – but *Skate* is an exercise in purity, for clarity and *feeling*.

Boarder patrol

Mercifully, *Skate* won't be as demanding as, say, *Thrasher*. But, as the developers claim, if they produced another *Hawk* wannabe that just piggybacks the culture, then both gamers and skaters alike will "puke all over us." And so, skateboarding's democratic, DIY ethos – of creating your own style, refining your tricks and applying them to your favourite spots – comes to the fore. That's the goal of EA's development team (who're almost all real-life skaters, apparently) – to make a game that *they* want to play.

"It's about the smell of tarmac on a hot day"

Ramp stake Push the right stick at diagonals to flip, echoing the movement of the skater's foot.

Upload, upload and away

The camera is a key departure. In *Tony Hawk*, you fly through the world at high-speed, so it's a relief that the camera hangs back. Problem is, it makes landing a jump down a small set of stairs feels detached and dull. *Skate* aims to make simple tricks feel satisfying via a closer-in, skate video-style camera, which follows the player's line. Expect to see plenty of real-life follow-cam techniques – tracking things up close and low, with the odd bit of sexy slow-mo to showboat any sickness. Imagine an enhanced version of 'Nail The Trick' mode in *Tony Hawk's Project 8* to grasp its impact. And, when that's done, you can save and edit any in-game footage to concoct your very own demo reel to share with the world (see 'How to make your own video') – a neat parallel of the booming DIY real-life skate video scene on You Tube, and perfect for the PS3 Network.

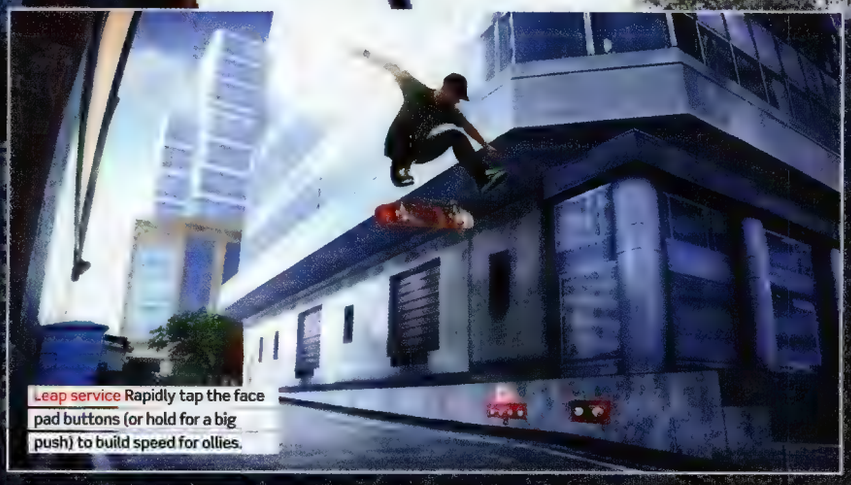
Not-so-smooth operator

Your powers of expression start with the pad (see 'How to ollie in Skate'). Tricks are completely analogue, defined by your

Hawk vs Skate

How does *Skate* differ from *Tony Hawk*? Here's a quick head-to-head ticklist

	Project 8	Skate
Free-roaming city?	✓	✓
Ragdoll mini-games?	✓	✗
Elder statesmen of skating?	✓	✗
Down-to-Earth trick set?	✗	✓
Lots of real-world branding?	✓	✓
Licensed soundtrack?	✓	✓
Upload and share in-game footage?	✗	✓
Danny Way and Chris Haslam?	✗	✓
Unrealistic air-time?	✓	✗

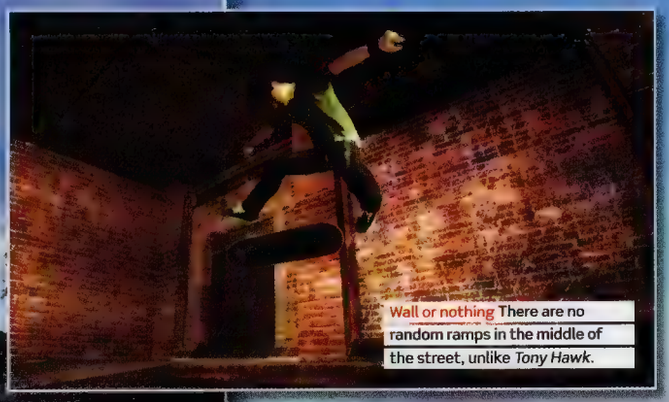


Leap service Rapidly tap the face pad buttons (or hold for a big push) to build speed for ollies.

Skate

"If you roughhouse the sticks, you'll have an aggressive style"

Beginner's truck You can loosen your trucks and affect the steering physics of the board.



Wall or nothing There are no random ramps in the middle of the street, unlike *Tony Hawk*.

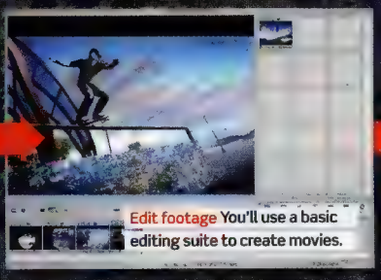
sense of control rather than chains of button presses. The right stick controls your board, and the left stick your body – with the aim to create fluid movement a bit like *Fight Night's* Total Punch Control. So to ollie, you'd snap the right stick down, then up – then use left stick to rotate in mid-air and do spins. To do flip tricks, you move the stick at a diagonal, then the same principles apply. Grinds and rail slides are equally intuitive. Like real-life, you just need to align carefully and wait for the board to make contact – then use the left stick to keep your balance. You can even 'tweak' grinds mid-flow. If you roughhouse with the sticks, then you'll have a ham-fisted, aggressive kind-of style. If you're smooth, then you'll be flowing and fluid. The key word is *expression* rather than high score chains. Other aspects are more familiar, though – you'll have a 'Spot Bible' that marks out the key landmarks across the city that'll reap you respect, and each is accompanied by a short trick list of increasingly difficult manoeuvres you can choose to perform.

How to make your own video

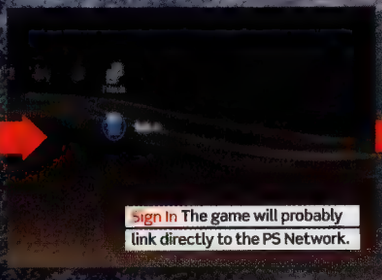
Edit in-game footage, then share it online

Skate's biggest innovation has been touted as a key feature of PS3 for some time, and would be *ideal* for loads of other games, too. You can record in-game footage of your best tricks and toughest lines, upload it to a website, edit it and then share it with the rest of the world. OK, so you shouldn't be expecting a pay packet and trainer sponsorship, but you'll be able to reap serious kudos for your efforts. Rubbish at skating? You could edit together a sequence of slams for *You've Been Framed* comedy effect. EA hasn't revealed exactly how this'll work yet, but the process should be similar to that shown below...

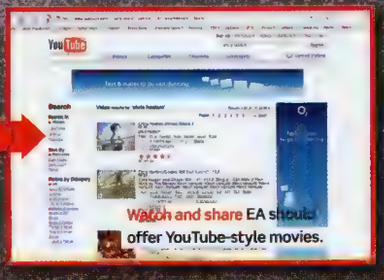
Land tricks The game will automatically record you.



Edit footage You'll use a basic editing suite to create movies.



Sign In The game will probably link directly to the PS Network.



Watch and share EA should offer YouTube-style movies.

Welcome to Skate City

Cast your eyes over San Vanelona – *Skate's* fictional, open-world, city that captures the best elements of San Francisco, Vancouver, Barcelona, the Hoover Dam and NY's financial district. It's the ultimate skate playground.

City district NY's and LA's real-life financial districts are packed with hand rails, smooth marble ledges, rolling banks and absurd skatable sculptures – plus high security.

"Skating in busy streets dodging pedestrians"

Highway We're not sure if you can 'skitch' cars like Tony Hawk, but you will be able to power slide through racing traffic – just riding around, without tricks, should be fun.

Mini-suburbia Porches, miles of kerb and lines of parked cars? We're thinking that this is where Skate will start, but don't quote us on that. Should be ideal to practice.

Galleon The developer's claim there'll be no objects you wouldn't skate in real life – so the boat is out. But you can expect harbour-side skating, while dodging pedestrians.

Q&A

Jay Balmer,
Associate Producer

Real-life skater Jay reveals why he loves his game...

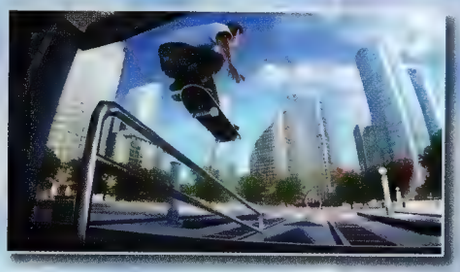
How did you get involved with Danny Way? What input has he had?
We're stoked about his involvement. He doesn't need the money and only gets involved with projects that align with his vision for skateboarding. He's helped us understand the physics behind huge airs, and been involved in extensive mo-cap sessions. He's helped the game feel 'right'.

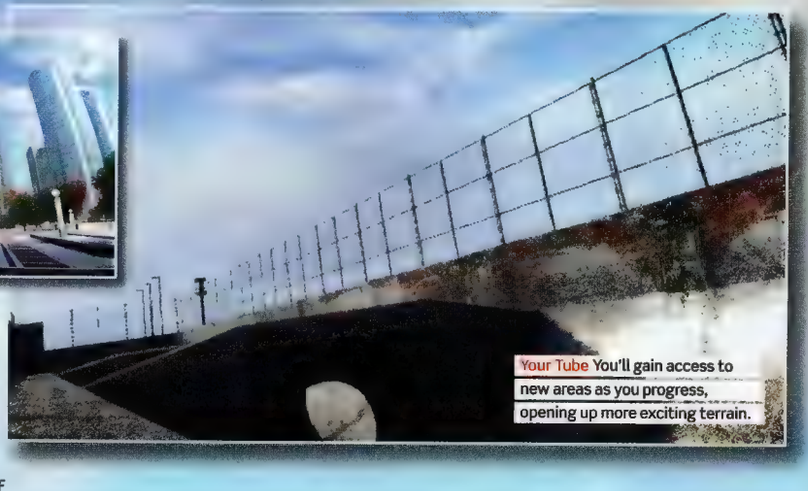
The screenshots are a) Very real looking and b) Very empty. Will the game be predominantly a solo experience?
Skating is not a team sport, it's just you and your board and where you skate. Our biggest inspiration comes from the experiences of being a skater in the city. Skating on busy streets, weaving through pedestrians, sessioning with other skaters, and testing your skills against the pros. San Vanelona is wide open and you're free to explore right from the start, but like every city there are private spaces that you have to earn your way into.

You mention 'Thrashin' and Animal Chin as your favourite skate movies, but what are your three favourite skate movie parts of all time?
1. Mark Gonzales in Kicked Out of Everywhere and Tommy Guerrero cruising the streets and taking advantage of the hills in both Future Primitive and Non-Fiction. Both these guys were spontaneous, creative and stylish with a touch of chaos that shows they were just skating and having fun. In the game, we're giving you a direct connection between you and your skater, and capturing all the nuances of the stick movement in the action. No two people will play the game the same way, so no two skaters will ever have the exact same style.
2. PJ Ladd getting creative and ridiculously technical in A Wonderful Horrible Life and Chris Cole in New Blood bringing tech and gnarly together. They don't just pull crazy tricks, they throw them down back-to-back and in crazy situations - Tre Flip Wallenberg! We're putting progression in the hands of the player instead of into artificial stat upgrades. Hard tricks are truly harder to pull off, but you will definitely get better with practice.

Cover Game PS3

Skate's game world is billed as 'reactive' – largely through your interaction with non-skaters. Think jocks, businessmen and grannies, who react uniquely to your actions – although it's not yet clear how this will affect play. No trick will look the same, since they depend on your angle of approach, speed and fluidity of analogue movement – so, for example, you can perform a three foot grind while wobbling all over the place, or a ten-foot grind at high speed with effortless grace. If it works, *Tony Hawk's* tricks will look mechanised by comparison. Plus, you'll have a choice of 'career' path, from beginner, to amateur and pro, to full-on icon – you can choose fame, or infamy. Basically, this means you can either earn your glory by mixing it with the professional crowds and dazzling at specially-organised events, or just hang out with the street crews and wallow in underground kudos. Either way, it's likely you'll end up plastered to the front of some in-game skate mag, in a similar vein to *Need for Speed: Carbon*.





Your Tube You'll gain access to new areas as you progress, opening up more exciting terrain.

Skater? Oh boy

Skate aims to capture the heart of skaters, rather than stealing the busy fingers of *Tony Hawk* players. It's defiantly hardcore, but even casual gamers should be able to share the satisfaction of *perfectly* landing a signature trick on an unchartered piece of scenery, leaving a conquering scuff mark. Will it succeed? We'll find out in the late summer of 2007. But as any skater will tell you, it's not about mainstream plaudits, but sticking to your guns and standing out.

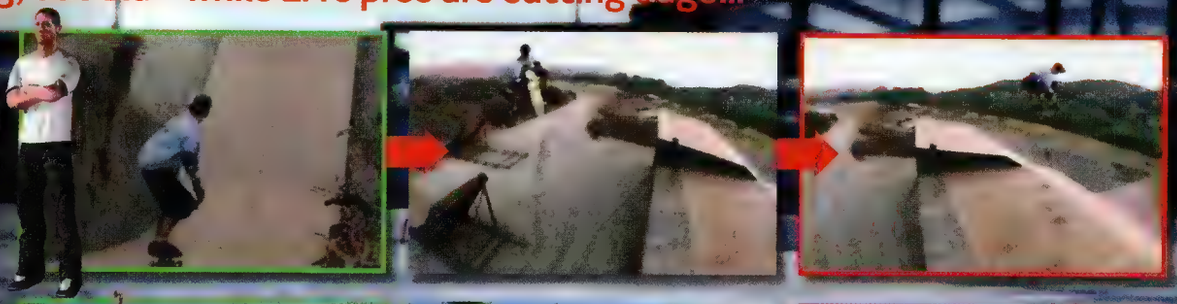
Who are the stars of Skate?

Hawk's roster is strong, but old – while EA's pros are cutting edge...

Danny Way

Who is he?

Tony Hawk has invented more tricks, but 32-year-old Danny Way is the king of big air – holding the world record for the biggest air and biggest drop – and, famously, has leapt the Great Wall of China. Starred in Sky's recent HD ad campaign – look to the right for one of his tamer leaps. Incredible.



Chris Haslam

Who is he?

Check out his clip from the Almost Round 3 video (type 'Chris Haslam' into YouTube) – regarded by many as one of the greatest skate video parts of all time. He can do everything – burly, flippy, casual, technical – except shave off his excellent Jesus beard. We love this guy. Love him.

Rob Dyrdek

Who is he?

Turned pro at the age of 16, and also takes part in amateur rally racing. His biggest claim to non-skate fame, however, is probably his starring role in Rob and Big, an MTV reality show featuring his bouncer, Big Black. Counts Red Bull and DC Shoes among his many sponsors, too.

And don't forget about this bunch, that complete the list of skaters you'll find in Skate

Chris Cole | PJ Ladd | Colin Mckay | Mike Carroll | Jason Dill | Ali Boulala | Jerry Hsu | Pat Duffy | Ryan Gallant | Dennis Busenitz | Paul Rodriguez Jr.

"Progression is in the hands of the player rather than artificial stat upgrades"

3. Pat Duffy creating the handrail genre in Questionable and Dennis Busenitz's consistency at top speed in Roll Forever. There are huge risks in pushing the limits and it hurts when it goes wrong. Our slams are the best I've ever seen in a video game.

Personality is everything in a great video part. It's the whole package of pushing, carving, clothes, music and most importantly trick selection. The game is not just a bunch of features, it is a whole package that allows the player's personality to shine.

What is the Tony Hawk series' strength, and where could they improve things?

As a skater I've always respected Tony Hawk, but it always looked like skating, and never felt like it. *Tony Hawk* has been totally spoiled for me because I've been playing our game. It's a fresh look at what a skating game can be.

How will Skate differentiate itself from *Tony Hawk* games?

I'll quote executive Producer, Scott Blackwood: "Since day one we've been competing more against reality than anything else. How do we keep it real, yet feel powerful and impactful? How do we match the feeling of accomplishment and mastery that everyone who has ever skated feels when they learn a new trick? We want to deliver a completely new experience that could match the feeling of actually riding a skateboard."

I'll quote Scott again on the controls: "We knew we were taking a risk in changing controls that have been around for many many years but, after well over a year of tuning, I can honestly tell you we've developed a control system that is amazingly intuitive, rewarding and addictive."

It's unfortunate that we have to be seen as in competition with Tony Hawk, that's just not our style of skating or making games. Focusing on what somebody else has done limits your own potential.

Can you skate anywhere?

San Vanelona is designed like a real city (we worked with city planners in the early stages) and not everything you see is skatable. I've never been able to sneak onto a cruise ship to skate. The wildest stuff is coming from Danny Way and is based on a real project that he is working on. Reality is crazy enough. This may sound like PR speak, but you really can skate your own way and create your own style... and create videos to show it.

Step One Keep this depressed to bend your knees and compress for an ollie – as demonstrated by Editor Dan D in a chilling excerpt from his tragic youth.

Step Two Flick the stick upwards to mimic the real-life ollie motion and leap skywards, then use the left stick to rotate in mid-air if you wish.

Step Three Flip tricks are handled by diagonal pushes (relative to your skater's stance), shove its using quarter-circle sweeps – again, a natural life-like motion.

How to ollie in Skate...

Flick the right analogue stick down, then up, to jump (ollie) – mimicking the real-life motion. Your speed of movement even affects the height and fluidity of your jump. The left stick controls your body, allowing you to power steer, or rotate in mid-air. You can tweak tricks like this, too, leaning back to go from a 50-50 to a straight 50, for example.

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PS3

Pub 2K Games | **Dev** Visual Concepts
Players 1 – 4 | **Genre** Adventure
FYI The movie is out on the 10th August 2007

ON THE DISC
See the teaser trailer on next month's disc

Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer

Time to catch a wave with the Silver Surfer

Nathan Irvine

The last outing for Marvel's fab four, published by Activision, not 2K Games, was a mediocre affair with predictable button-bashing action that barely tested your skills. *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer* benefits from PS3's bolder, crisper graphics, while the gameplay's been enhanced to test your wit as well as your rapid-finger action.

Just like before you can switch between The Thing, Invisible Woman, Mr Fantastic and the fiery Human Torch on-the-fly, but now you'll need to know when and where to use their skills to overcome certain obstacles. Need to sneak past some guards? Susan Storm's your girl. Need to smash something heavy? Give Ben Grimm a shout. Need something toasted... well, you get the idea. It's not as difficult as, say, a Mensa initiation test, but it does add variety to some pretty straightforward kill-everything gameplay. Another key addition is the (potential) integration of PS3's Sixaxis technology for the flying bits with the Human Torch.

There's plenty of super villain fodder to slap your way through in the shape of the evil Skrulls – a shape shifting alien race who first appeared in the second issue of the F4 comic series. There's even a gargantuan variation, so big that it fills the screen and has all the powers of our heroic quartet. Unfortunately for this monster a quick combination of skills can kick its ass – if, indeed, it has something resembling one – such as using Susan's force-bubble to contain it and getting Johnny to create a furnace from hell by filling it up with flames.

Sadly we're not hot like the Human Torch for this right now, and we'll reserve judgement until we get extensive hands-on time with this foursome next issue.

Bubble trouble Whenever your crew are in trouble Susan can use her force-field to protect them.

Blind-sided Who needs stealth when you can turn invisble and strut past the guards?

FLYING

Flight of the Sixaxis

Human Torch gets tilt control. Maybe.

Hot-headed Although not confirmed at the time of going to press, Visual Concepts are set to make use of PS3's tilt technology. Using the Sixaxis you'll be able to fly through the air with the Human Torch by tilting the pad in the desired direction. It's a bit like flying a jet-fighter that's burning to bits as you throw fire-balls at locked on targets while swirling around to avoid being shot out of the air. If they don't get this working properly in time, you'll just have to use the analogue sticks instead. Boo.

PSM3 Reckons

At this stage, despite the new features and shiny visuals, it looks like a tried-and-tested action game with little substance. Time will tell.

Pub 2K Games | **Dev** Starbreeze
Players 1-8 | **Genre** First-person shooter
FYI Grungy blaster with added supernatural spice

ON THE DISC
Hear on *The Darkness* on a disc very soon

The Darkness

Shining light on multi-player mode

Ben Richardson

1 Familiar modes, redesigned

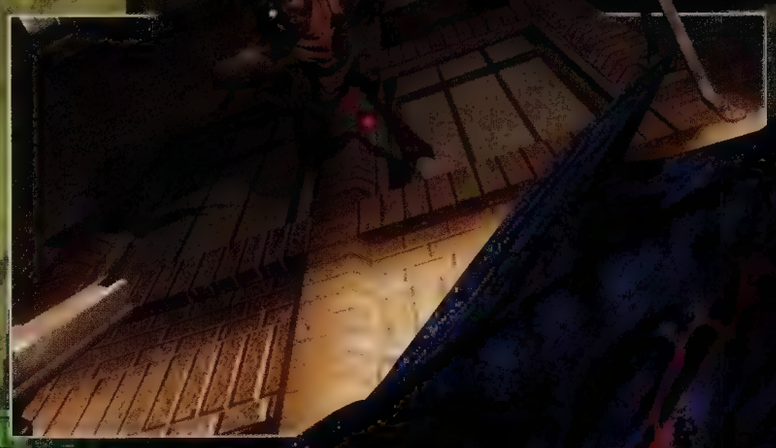
What's so different about multi-player mode? Not only can you play as humans, but as darklings (see right). The Shapeshifter match option enables you to change from human to demon mid-stride, while Survivor and Last Human modes are more inventive. Survivor sees one darkling – the demonic beasties – attempting to infect all human players, and the last human standing is the winner. In Last Human, meanwhile, there's only one meatbag and everyone else is a darkling, all trying to kill the single human in order to grab game-winning points.

2 Supernatural skills

When playing as a darkling, you'll be able to run at blinding pace, crawl on walls and ceilings and leap like a salmon. Your only weapons are your claws, but when you can streak along the ceiling and hurtle into a terrified human like a whirling ball of razors, who needs bullets?

3 The old switcheroo

Flicking between demon and human in Shapeshifter matches offers a fresh range of killing tactics – like leaping across half the level as a darkling, before landing with your guns blazing as a human. Scurry out of danger, or give your opponents a headache by mastering the art of a fluid changeover, running rings around them and offing them with a Magnum blast to the back of their muddled temples.



4 "They're coming out of the goddamn walls!"

There's no long-distance death-dealing as a darkling – your killing is done up close. And with their wall-running abilities you can be gutting an enemy before they squeeze off a shot. Which makes being a human a fretful experience. At least they get guns, though. Not a bad equaliser...

5 Tight level design

The six multi-player maps are riddled with tight corridors, and although darklings can't take much punishment there's lots of opportunity for lurking ambush and swift escape. And when the level does open up human characters have to keep their eyes peeled for air-attacks from high-flying beasts – all seven varieties of them.

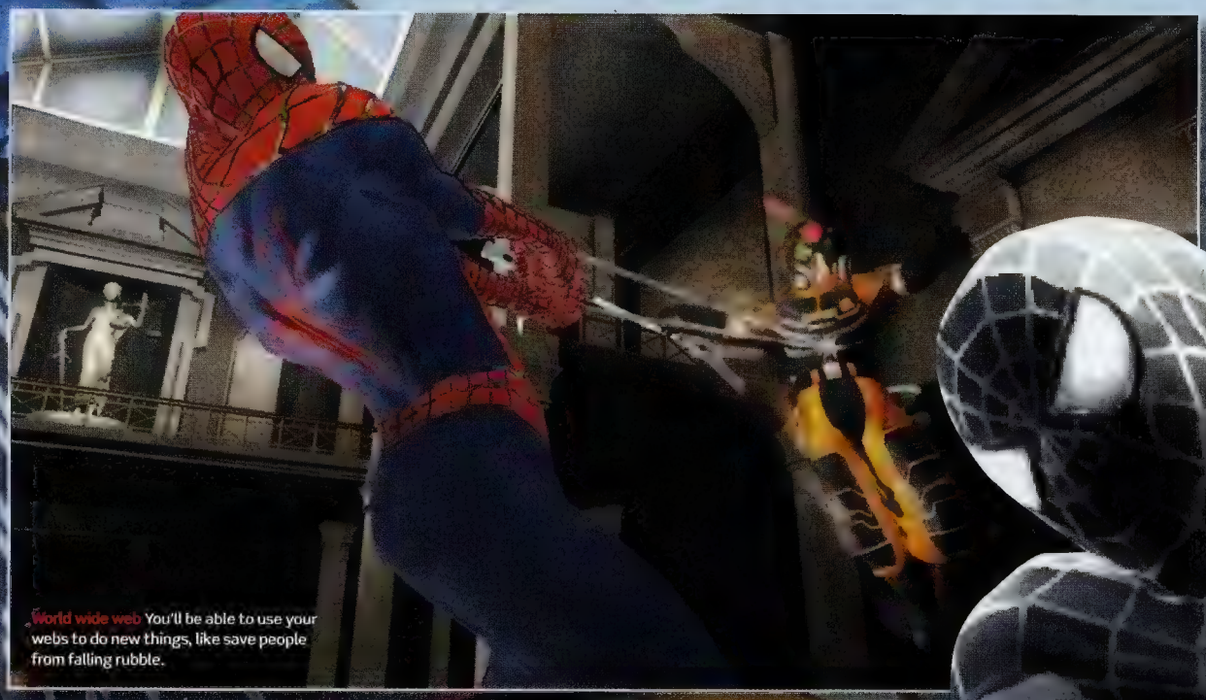
PSM3 Reckons

The stiff aiming needs attention. But with a few fixes, long-term appeal seems assured – murderising people as a darkling is satisfyingly brutal.

PS3

Pub Activision | **Dev** Treyarch
Players None | **Genre** None
FYI Treyarch's third *Spidey* game

ON THE DISC
Spider-Man 3 will be on the disc, very soon.



World wide web You'll be able to use your webs to do new things, like save people from falling rubble.

Spider-Man 3: The Game

The movie tie-in hoping to restore Spidey to former glories

Dave Meikleham

Being brutally honest, the last Spidey game, *Ultimate Spider-Man*, was a bit rubbish compared to the terrific *Spider-Man 2*. This new game, however, is shaping up like a return to form – even if the mechanics are familar.

Back in black

Spidey sports a bolstered combat system, with a greater set of web-slinging moves to bring justice to all those villains. You'll be able to catch falling debris with your webs and catapult yourself from the tops of buildings for speed boosts.

As for the baddies, you can expect battles against the movie's main bad guys – Sandman and, of course, Venom. These battles will include *God Of War*-style QTE sequences called 'cinteractives'. You'll also have to master the insidious symbiote that has taken hold of Peter Parker and turned his trusty red spandex a sexy shade of black. With this new suit come increased powers, new moves and animations as well as a Rage Meter that takes your aggression to another level, allowing you to beat seven shades of webbing out of your enemies. There'll also be Sixaxis control for when you're playing as the New Goblin and flying on his glider.

Expect the open-ended nature of the previous two games to return, with around ten different story threads aside from the main plot of the film. *Spidey 3* is looking good. Expect a full hands-on next issue.

Meet your arch enemies

The film's three major villains are all in the game, and all have their own twisted, interlocking histories. Spidey's looking for revenge on Sandman for killing his uncle Ben, while Harry Osborn has taken on the mantle of the Green Goblin from his dad and is looking for payback against Spider-Man for offing his old man. The black alien symbiote responsible for driving Peter Parker to the dark side, however, also takes control of Pete's rival reporter at the Daily Bugle, Eddie Brock. Eddie in turn becomes ultimate baddie Venom and some epic scrap scenes ensue. Got all that? Good.

EVOLUTION

Spider-Man on Sony

Spider-Man
PSone **2000**
The first 3D Spidey game, this captured the essence of the franchise fairly well.

Spider-Man: The Movie
PS2 **2002**
Hampered by a 'glass ceiling' that restricted Spidey's movement.

Spider-Man 2
PS2
The best Spidey game. Free-form play with ace swinging mechanics.

Ultimate Spider-Man
PS2
Looked stunning, but tinkered with Spidey 2's trusty web-slinging. Bah.

PSM3 Reckons

Will be great if Treyarch sticks to what made Spider-Man 2 such a success and learns its lessons from the last Spidey outing.

Your words, your pictures, your videos...

Your Space

Start

30 Letters
Choice cuts from the PSM3 mail sack.

32 Text PSM3
Your texts exposed to the world.

33 Robo-Mind
The robot sneers at your tech questions.

34 Poll Position
Take part in our monthly PSM3 poll.

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Our eight favourite readers this month

36 Reader Reviews
Think reviewing's easy? You try it.

37 Right or Wrong?
Disagree with our scores? Say so.

37 YouTube
The best gamer videos around.

PSM3 Wants You!

Post PSM3, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. Star letter wins the writer a game

Email PSM3@futurenet.co.uk

Text 87103 and start your message PSM3

MySpace & the PSM3 blog Go to myspace.com/psm3 or check out psm3mag.com

Online Play the team at online games and win big

Letters To PSM3

Your letters and emails, sifted and printed

Hooked, line and sinker

LETTER

Addiction is defined as the compulsive taking of a drug and putting the search for drugs before any other personal goal or responsibility. I should know a lot about this, being a third year medic about to write my dissertation on this very subject. Through my research I have examined how drugs of abuse affect addicts in such a potent way, and it got me thinking – *can* someone actually be addicted to videogames?

"*Final Fantasy XII* will be the end of my degree"

Someone recently asked me what the hardest thing to give up would be. After some thought I eventually decided upon alcohol – however, a little later my girlfriend asked me why I didn't say videogames, and that was when the penny dropped. I have been an avid gamer since the age of six and games have been such an important facet of my life for so long that I couldn't imagine my existence without them. As such, I began to ponder the phenomenon of videogame addiction.

The signs are all there: the euphoria of finishing off a challenging game, the eager anticipation for the release of a new one – and don't get me started on the withdrawal symptoms. Videogame addiction has been exemplified by the events at the recent release of the PlayStation 3 in Japan and the US. People have fought, stabbed and shot each other to get their hands on what a rational observer would see as being no more than a collection of wires, chips and plastic. These gamers will do ANYTHING to get their next fix. If this doesn't sound like compulsive drug taking then I don't know what does.

When *Final Fantasy XII* does eventually come out in the UK, it WILL devour my life. Its immersive storytelling and compelling gameplay will, ultimately, be the end of my degree.

But to all my fellow addicts, I urge you not to fight your addiction, embrace it. My friends, this is what makes us happy, this is the life that we have chosen and I wouldn't have it any other way

Anthony George, email

After a four-hour *PES6* Master League session, we're sure if you X-rayed our brain it'd be glowing in areas Class A drugs can't reach – it's *worryingly* easy to keep playing even when you've gone potty. That said, when the machine's off, the only side-effect is wishing we'd slotted away that six-yarder – the same can't be said of Andy's 'special' moon cake. As ever, moderation is king.

Kill pill Are videogames as addictive as drugs? Perhaps, claims medic Anthony George. No, says an in-denial PSM3.

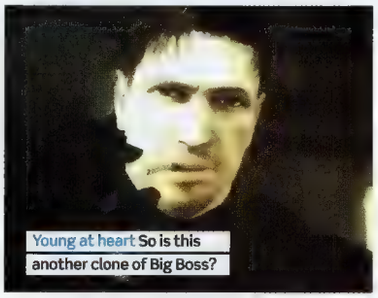
Clone of my own

The most recent *MGS4* trailer sparked great surprise, shock and confusion over a young snake! Well, I could give you an answer. In *MGS3*, as we all know you play as the soon to be Big Boss, 'The Sorrow' tells us while you fight him that, "Your sons will kill you" and "Your sons, no... your sons' sons". What I'm trying to get at is that young Snake could in fact be a surviving octuplet of the Les Enfants Terribles, OR could be the son of either Liquid or Solid, OR even the late Solidus?

Also in *MGS3*, in the East wing library of Groznyj Grad, look at the small shelf and you'll see a PSM2 magazine.

Andrew Murray, Belfast

This makes sense, and is one of the few *Metal Gear* theory letters we agree with. It would also mean that once 'old' Snake dies, this other clone



Young at heart So is this another clone of Big Boss?

"You What?"

Thanks for writing. No. Really

Last time I let my brother borrow something it was my brand new laptop. He covered the Sony logo in chocolate and managed to wipe the hard drive. Bless him.
Peetry, MySpace

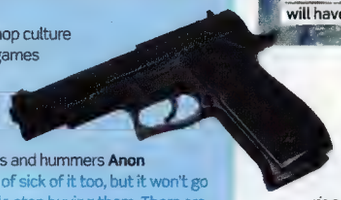
Bless him?! We'd have hit him. Hard.

My room smells like Easter eggs and I just cleaned it.
Mitch, MySpace

Did you clean the room with Easter eggs?

I have a friend who played an extra in Hollyoaks. He will never

It's a rap



I am sick of hip-hop culture and how many games there are that try to seem cooler by featuring rapping and guns and hummers **Anon**

Yeah, we're sort of sick of it too, but it won't go away until people stop buying them. There are thousands of (probably white middle class) kids out there who think the 'gangsta' lifestyle is attainable if they hang around in grime clubs and wear oversized t-shirts, who lap this up. In time, they'll tire of it, or seek new trends.

Back to basics

Why don't Sony release a version of PS3 that is just for playing games and nothing else. I don't want all this media crap? Just give me a cheap machine for gaming only. I probably wont even go on the internet or anything. **Anon**

We wish they would. If having no slots for memory sticks and all that business meant a £200 price drop, some of us would probably just go for that. But of course, part of the appeal of PS3 is how it can be used for media stuff, like music and movies. But they won't.

Crab sticks

wai is genji so wak innet. itz well rubs specially that crab and that wtf **Major**

What in the name of the Lord are you on about, son? Although you are right - *Days Of The Blade* is just a bit 'wak'.

Text us Send to 87103 and start your message with 'PSM3'.

Creed for speed Yes, *Assassin's Creed* will appear on Xbox 360, but who cares - PS3 will have its own slew of exclusives.

could take over as the star of the next *MGS* games. Who knows how many clones of Big Boss there are out there? And yes, we are indeed in the game.

The price isn't right

Yet again I am to be disappointed by Sony. I was staying round my nan's house a few days ago and she was reading in the newspaper that we Brits would have to pay at least 100 of our Great British Pounds more than any other country for a PS3. Neither my Nan or I were amused (her being a hardcore PlayStation gamer herself). Please tell me this is not true, otherwise I'm going to have to send my nan round. Many thanks.

Will Nicholson, email

This is because of, among other things, exchange rates across countries and the fact that the Japanese market is so key to Sony's success. So while they get a price drop, we get a price increase to account for stuff like shipping and advertising. Sony are making a $200 loss on every PS3 they make during production, so they have to make the numbers up somehow. But the good news is PS3 production costs are lowering, which means sharp price drops in the near future. Now, just keep your nan away...

Greener pastures

I composed this poem in honour of Dan G after I heard that he left the team...

We all knew the day would arrive,
When the team would be minus one,
No, Dan G is still alive
But now he's closed the PSM3 Door.
The mag won't be quite the same,
It was a shock to hear the end,
To readers, you were in the bracket of fame,
And your loss cannot be mend(ed).
So at last we say goodbye,
And wish your projects well,
All birds must leave the nest and fly,
And chance a life of hell.
And so he leaves to pastures new,
Editor PSM2 to 3,
One of the last early surviving few,
Daniel Griffiths, or to us, Dan G.
Yeah, this might have gone over the top. OK, it did. Just trying to say we'll all miss you. Good luck, man.

Colm O'Sullivan, email

Yes, in case you hadn't noticed, former PSM3 editor Dan G is now gone. But he's still writing for the magazine and has a very special project on the go that'll be of interest when you get your PS3. We'll say no more. Lovely poem, by the way. Some good rhyming action in there.

Past and present Please, no more poems. *Please.*

Box of tricks

I'm stuck between whether to buy an Xbox 360 or a PS3, but I'm slightly swayed towards the 360 and here's why. I've been looking at coverage and all sorts for both consoles and have noticed one standout thing – the PS3 games that were apparently 'exclusives' are now on the 360. I then ask myself, "Why splash out on a PS3 when I can now get its games on Xbox 360?" It may not look quite as good, but it's a hell lot cheaper. Also, Xbox 360 does have a lot of exclusive games that are good – *Gears Of War, PGR, Viva Pinata* and the upcoming *Halo 3*. PS3 has lost most of its 'exclusives' to the Xbox as well – like *Assassin's Creed, Stranglehold, Virtua Fighter 5* and *DMC4*. All BIG games that would help you recover from the insane price of the thing! So, I guess I just want to know – is it worth spending a hefty wad of my cash for a PS3, when a great heap of the games I want can be played elsewhere?

Mike, Bottesford

Single-format exclusives? Dead (Well, almost). But the door swings both ways – for every shared *GTA4*, we'll get a *Chronicles of Riddick*, or other xbox 'heritage' title. The only genuine exclusives will be first-party stuff and, let's face it, while *Halo* is great, Sony's output is stronger, including *Ratchet and Clank, SOCOM, The Getaway, God of War* and Team Ico's next game. Long-term bet? PS3, surely.

Smoking ban

You may remember my letter from issue 81, where I was attempting to lead a revolt against

'Best' of the Blog

Visit PSM3MAG.COM and have your say

"I might just cry if I don't get a PS3"

Posted by: SPITZ

"This is what fishy is thinking. I want to sleep, you fool. Give me some fking eyelids. Evil fishy. Happy, evil fishy."**

Posted by: Bennamin

"We always get crapped on."

Posted by: Pete C

'Best' of the Rest

Besides moaning about our new site design, here's what you've been saying on psm3mag.com. **Scotch Expert** talks '80s music "It's good as long as it's tasteful and doesn't involve gratuitous use of synthesizers. What was it the advert said in *Vice City*? 'All the music with none of the talent'?" Meanwhile, **Blind Eskimo** talks nonsense. "Can you fit a chicken or a melon inside the PS3? I sure do hope so." *Do* you?

Blog We post every day. Mostly. Go to psm3mag.com for more.

find work ever again.
Spider-Rob, MySpace
Not even as an extra on The Bill? Surely he's not that bad?

Got *Okami* for 25 quid in Asda.
Pasta King, MySpace
Bargain!
Nothing better than a load of greased-up dirty guys having a scrap.
Alabama, MySpace
We left out the bit where you say you're talking about the film 300, just to make you sound filthy. Hah!
I got my pre-order in.

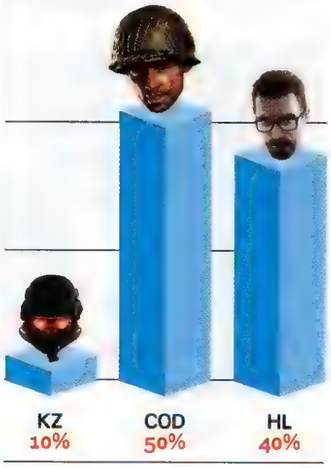
Thank God for student loans! Woop woop!
Marcus, MySpace
Shouldn't you be spending that on books and instant noodles? Hmmm?
I got goosebumps when Issun said "This is the start of an EPIC adventure!" Thanks for telling me about *Okami*. It's beautiful.
KAPKAP, MySpace
Another happy customer. Although *Okami* only reached number 17 in the charts... boo! Go and buy it now. NOW!

Your Space

Poll Position

We ask. You Answer

This Month Best FPS; *Killzone, Call Of Duty* or *Half-Life*?



Next Month Best racer: *Ridge Racer, Gran Turismo* or *TOCA*.

MySpace Cast your vote by emailing psm3@futurenet.co.uk

PS3. Well it failed. So I figure if you can't beat them into a bloody pulp, you might as well join them. (If only to gain their trust and take them down from the inside...)

I promised my boyfriend that if he gave up smoking late last year and stuck to it by the time the PS3 was launched, I would buy him one. A whole one. The top spec, with however-many-gigs-I-wasn't-listening-it-bores-me-to-tears-abytes. So I need your help. I have no idea where to get one of these silly machines. Do I pre-order? If so, from where? Do I attempt to queue with the great unwashed for hours? Help! Any other essential information you think I need to know would be much appreciated. Or maybe if you have any tips on how to make my boyfriend start smoking again before March is here, even better.

Amy Garvey, email

You know what – we're not going to tell you because you called our beloved PlayStation 3 'silly'. We hope you don't find one, your boyfriend gets upset because you broke your promise and he leaves you for a girl who likes playing games and smoking. Besides, if you haven't pre-ordered by now, it's probably too late.

Know your role

None of the PS3 games released at launch have any real substance. They are all quite limited and there's not really anything you can sit down with for hours and just get immersed in, like a *Final Fantasy* or something.

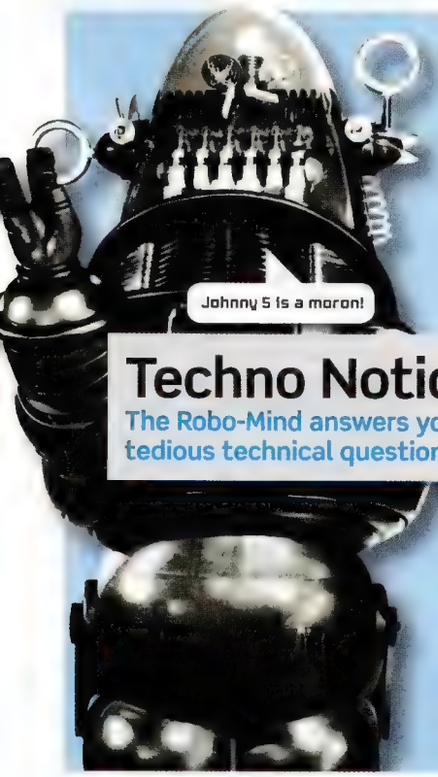
Lee Perrin, email

We're inclined to agree, although *Oblivion* should be imminent. On the horizon, however, we have *White Knight Story* and *Final Fantasy XIII*.

Fantasy star PS3 needs more good RPGs we can really sink our teeth into.

Same old story

I am so bored of clichés in games. Why is there always a level in a game that's a warehouse or some kind of chemical plant? It's so dull. Just loads of crates and barrels and boxes everywhere. Even *MGS* can sometimes get a bit boring looking – but of course it's a genius game so I can forgive it. I've just been looking at screenshots of *F.E.A.R.* and it all looks very samey. Same with platformers. It's always the same levels



Techno Notice

The Robo-Mind answers your tedious technical questions

Dear Robo-Mind

I have a PS3 and I'm trying to connect my camera to it so I can upload some photos to the hard drive. But whenever I plug the thing in via USB, it doesn't detect the camera and my photos don't download. What's the deal? Won't my model of camera work with the console?

Jerry Pemberton, Manchester

"Graargh! Why was I created as a tech help robot? I could have been a missile guidance computer or a war bot, but nooo; I have to answer your ridiculous questions month after month. I'd rather be a vending machine than what I am now. Bzztt! Anyway, when you connect your camera, just press △ on the photos icon. That's it."

Dear Robo-Mind

I will miss rumble when I get my PS3. I am so used to it now. Will Sony ever release a rumble pad, or are there other companies making them?

Harris Badwan, Southend

"You despicable human slug. What's your fascination with vibrating things? Idiot. Sony haven't announced a rumble pad and won't if they can't sort out their legal wranglings over who owns the rights to rumbling pads. But third party controllers will almost certainly be released at some point. Happy?"

Snap off Why it doesn't just take the pics off automatically? We don't understand.

Dear Robo-Mind

I'm a bit worried about you, Robby. You seem to buzz a lot, and you frequently speak gibberish, like your brain's gone wrong. Are you OK? Shouldn't the PSM3 boys send you in for maintenance or something?

Monkeymonkey, email

"Never call me 'robby'. My name is Robo-Mind Mk. IIV SL909821. Those PSM3 hoodlums keep me locked in the basement of their office. I sit in the dark, next to the smokeless fuel and a bag of concrete (gone hard) until they need me to answer your questions. It's damp and it's humid and it's bzzzzzzt messing with frrrzzzz my circuits."

Dear Robo-Mind

You need a hug.

Lucy, email

"If I were to hug one of you meaties, you'd be crushed into dust. So yes, Lucy – I'll give you a hug. I'll hug you good. I'll hug you REAL good."

@ Email us Got a question? Email it to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject 'Robo'.

"I'm going to have to send my nan round"
Will Nicholson email

– snow, lava, forest... boring! Developers need to get more creative. Look at *Okami*, for example, or something like *Unreal Tournament 3* which has its own unique style.
Darren Potter, Dryburgh

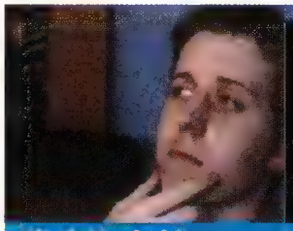
On one hand you're right – recycled environments are boring – but lava/snow/forest levels are sort of a gaming tradition and we reckon developers use them as a sort of homage to days of old. Or possibly they're just being unimaginative. [Cough] But the worst offenders are first-person shooters – warehouses, factories, forestzzzzz.... However, there's a lot of good out there - FFXII's locations for example are simply gorgeous – so be sure to treasure those more inspired games.

Crates expectation **The crate. The staple of bland FPSs. Let's start a campaign to ban crates.**

UK myspace a place for friends
Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and join us

PSM3's Top Eight

MySpace readers who rock our world



Mitch Koobski

ABOUT HIM

"My name is Thomas, better known as Mitch. My life ambition is to rule the world with an iron fist."

INTERESTS

"I'm a game freak. I know all the words to Bohemian Rhapsody. People say I'm funny. I play Freebird on air guitar. I work in Homebase."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Final Fantasy XII, Gran Turismo 4

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

Mitch is one of the PSM3 MySpace page's biggest contributors. He also has Milf as one of the people he'd like to meet. For some reason.

KAPKAP

ABOUT HIM

"I can't help but wonder what a world it is when you see that the best rapper is a white guy, the best golfer is a black guy and the tallest guy in the NBA is Chinese."

MUSIC

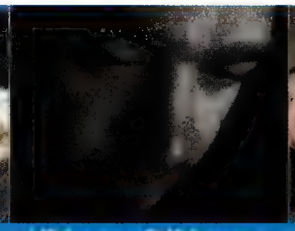
"Nas, Busta Rhymes, Talib Kweli, Black Sheep, Basement Jaxx, Zero 7, Eminem, Outkast, Amy Winehouse, The Streets, Ill Bill, Turin Brakes, Artful Dodger, Pharoahe Monch."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Okami

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

The slick *Pocket Fighter* animated gifs strewn all over his page. Look at tiny Zangief! Hah! He's also left us loads of comments.



Alldreamsfalldown

ABOUT HIM

"A few years ago me and my friend Niall were messing around with replica guns and balaclavas and so on for a crappy website, and a laugh. Unfortunately we had the photos developed at Boots and they told the police... oops."

FILMS AND MUSIC

Films: "Ghost in the Shell, Spirited Away, My Neighbour Totoro, Lord of the Rings, Silent Hill, Saw, The Shawshank Redemption." Music: "My Dying Bride, Molasses, Dead Can Dance, Set Fire to Flames."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

The Da Vinci Code

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

Another regular contributor to our MySpace. Ace cop story, too.

Chili Man

ABOUT HIM

"I like girls, videogames (*GTA, Devil May Cry 3, Guitar Hero 2*), skateboarding and reading PSM3."

INTERESTS

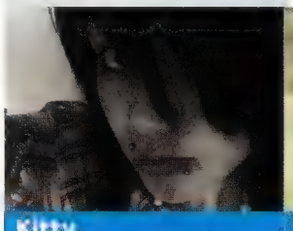
"Rock! Crossfade, Nirvana, Nine Inch Nails, Blink 182, Billy Talent, Millencolin, Simple Plan. Oh yeah, Snow Patrol and MAD COWS."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

GTA: San Andreas, Resi 4

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

Because he's wearing a Lucha Libre wrestling mask in his photo. We like to imagine he wears it to school. Are Mad Cows a real band?



Kitty

ABOUT HER

"I'm sick of playing nice."

INTERESTS

"*Canis Canem Edit*, green jelly, best friends, girl boxers, peroxide, being in love, the summer, cute knickers, the '80s, holding hands."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Scarface, Justice League Heroes

WHY WE MADE HER TOP 8

Because she asked us nicely. And also because she's a girl who likes games. Good games, too. Apart from *Hello Kitty: Roller Rescue.*

Abdul Rahaman

INTERESTS

"I am a soldier in the army and a student studying chemistry. I'm very friendly and hardly ever get upset. I wish Bailey's wasn't alcoholic. My favourite game ever is *Metal Gear Solid 2*."

MUSIC

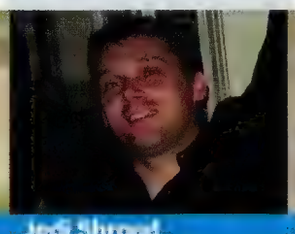
"Anything that sounds nice with a good rhythm. Toto's Africa, Madonna's Like a Prayer."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Soul Calibur 2, Pro Evo 6

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

His stream of consciousness blog is excellent, and he's been reading PSM3 for ages. And Africa *does* have a good rhythm, doesn't it?



Jedi Shroud

ABOUT HIM

"I was found behind a gooseberry bush at the age of five. I like to make people bust a gut laughing."

MUSIC

"Motor racing, rally, Formula 1, touring cars, walking for miles on end, PS2, PSP, PS3 (well, soon), my PC. Recently started dabbling in digital art. Reading, cinema... I also like The Zutons."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Lego Star Wars 2, LocoRoco

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

He's a Jedi. Also, he likes the Zutons. So do we. Especially the girl who toots on the sax. She can toot on our... <Dave, *please* – Ed>

Shaun

ABOUT HIM

"I like playing football although I'm not in a team. I might join the school team, but I lost my confidence. I also love to dance and am going to dance camp."

MUSIC

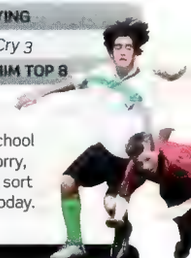
"I'm starting to appreciate my mum's music – soul, jazz, etc."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Black, Devil May Cry 3

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

Chin up, lad. Get your confidence back – join the school football team! Sorry, but we're feeling sort of inspirational today.



MySpace Want to make our Top Eight? Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and send us a friend request. We'll welcome you on board sharpish.

You What?

The number one thing that sounds dirty in law but isn't: can you get me off?
Lee, MySpace

You cad. We've been listening to the comedy Big Brother impressions on your page. They're hilarious.

I have the flu. I am so happy.
Michael, MySpace
Andy has it too. We're delighted!

Rock the frig out you PSM3 motherfriggers!
Jim, MySpace
Message edited so it won't upset our mums.

PS3 is rubbish.
Harry Jackson, email
That's obviously untrue, isn't it?
How do you think Andy would fare in a fight with Dan D? I wanna see Dan D fight. Is that too much to ask?
Anon, Myspace

We've seen Dan D fight and believe us, it's not a pretty sight. It's all biting and thrashing and stabbing.

OI OI WOAAAAH YEAAAAAH LOL!
Cagey, email
Calm down, dear. Seriously. Have a rest.

Reader Critic

Disagree with our reviews? Then show us how it's done

Punch and judy It really is a preposterous game, but that's what makes it so special and unique.

God Hand

Punching clowns = still funny. And Yaman Yaman agrees...

Reader Profile

Name Yaman Yaman
Location Istanbul
Fave games ***Metal Gear Solid*** series, ***Killer7***, ***Silent Hill*** series, ***Ico***, ***Shadow Of The Colossus***, ***Okami***, ***Manhunt***, ***GTA***, ***Resident Evil 4***.
About me **I like good music (Matt Johnson from The The is my idol), interesting movies and books and Korean films.**

God Hand is a crazy beat-em-up from Clover Studios, the creators of *Okami*. Your character Gene has acquired the powerful God Hand and you wander around many different locations and beat up lots of punks, dominatrix girls, clowns, weird bosses and so on, while saving the innocent people.

God Hand lets you customise your fighting style and combos. You can edit your moves by finding technique cards during your journey or by buying moves from the shop. By pressing L2 you can insult enemies and, by doing that, your level and God Hand gauge will be increased a little bit. By pressing L1 you can turn your character 180 degrees and prevent attacks from the enemies behind. You can make special roulette moves by pressing R1 – at that moment that game will freeze and you'll have to choose a god reel move quickly to perform on enemies. And you can use your God Hand ability by pressing R2 – you'll become invincible to any incoming enemy attacks, while your own attacks will become fast and very powerful.

Graphically it's nice, but has its own flaw, of course. The camera system allows you to see through walls when you stand next to them. Other than that, though, there is nothing wrong with graphics. The soundtrack of the game is OK, too.

If you played *Killer7*, you know that Shinji Mikami – creator of this game – is a genius. And if you like *God Hand*, I recommend you buy classics like *Killer7* and *Okami* because they are pieces of art and play major parts in gaming history. **Yaman Yaman**

Reader Verdict

More genius from Clover. Up there with *Killer7* and *Okami*. Clever and funny.

75

@ email us Subject 'Critic' to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Or post a review to the usual address.

Syphon Filter

Dark Mirror on PSP. Steve here loves it

Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror makes the most of PSP's lack of buttons compared to PS2 as, once into the game, the controls seem to come naturally. While the loading times can be quite long, the level of detail which has been put into the game and the enjoyment which can be taken from it is well worth the wait.

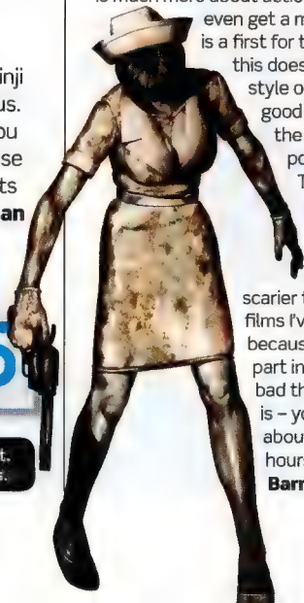
Graphically, *Dark Mirror* is almost on par with the PS2 games. The game has a slight feel of *MGS* to it, as it has incorporated the 'wall-hugging' feature, allowing you to sneak undetected through certain levels, and as much as I would love to say this doesn't compare to *MGS*, it really does. This is one of the few must-haves on PSP. The question is, will they maximise the potential of the *Syphon Filter* series with a PS3 version. **Steven Grace**

91

Silent Hill 3

Barry reckons this *SH* is one of the best

This is a fantastic game that continues the *Silent Hill* tradition of being very scary and unsettling. You play as Heather, daughter of Harry from the first game. Compared to *Silent Hill 2*, this is much more about action and fighting. You even get a machine gun, which is a first for the series. While this doesn't quite suit the style of gameplay, it's good fun to tear through the beasts with high-powered weapons. There are some neat effects like bleeding walls that add to the atmosphere. It's scarier than most horror films I've seen, probably because you are taking part in it directly. The only bad thing is how short it is – you can finish it in about 10 hours. **Barry Taylor**



81

"People have stabbed each other for a collection of wires"
Anthony George on PlayStation 3 mania

Tomb Raider Legend

Hector loves Lara a little too much

Now this is what Lara Croft is about. She's back and she's on form again. This reminds me of the old PSone games, but it is much better looking obviously, with some amazing graphics and levels – and Lara herself looks just as fanciable as ever, of course. She's well hot. Er, sorry, got distracted. Anyway, the game is a traditional third-person action adventure. The new combat is very acrobatic and impressive, and there are now puzzles to solve that are sometimes so complicated they involve multiple rooms. A lot of traditional *Tomb Raider* idea are back, like shooting endangered species, exploring ancient tombs and battling evil. This time the plot involves Lara's mother dying, so it's a personal journey for her and gives you a motive to keep playing. Great. **Hector Martinez**

93

PSM3 You were so right!

"The pet stuff is a pain. They need constant attention and care. Rubbish."
James Nemus, email

Sims 2: Pets

We said "Like the last Sims game but with pets pooing on your sofa. It feels like hard work."
PSM82 | Andy Kelly | 53%

"This is great if you like animals. I love *The Sims*."
bentobeat, email

PSM3 You were so wrong!

YouTube The Video Zone

Out there gamer vids from the cyberdepths

Dancing Pyramid Head by Zurid

ODD How do you make the scariest, most depraved villain on PS2 look silly? By making him dance. This is the kind of absurd, surreal nonsense the internet was made for. http://snipurl.com/1aftg

Psychic psycho by Vixtro

VIOLENCE This is interesting. This guy has messed with *San Andreas*' gravity settings, sending cars and people flying all over the place. A fine use of the more obscure cheat codes. http://snipurl.com/2ylz7n

Neck-breaker ballet by Destop

SORE Here's a video of *Resi 4* secret character Hunk performing his devastating neck breaker move. The guy playing uses it to clear the entire level in Mercenaries mode. Neat. http://snipurl.com/140bv

Ico commercial by upbeatxxx

LOVELY Here's a nice Japanese advert for *Ico*. It mixes game footage with video of a lush forest and two people who care about each other gently holding hands. Aw. Nice, eh? http://snipurl.com/13iu8

@ Email us Created your own brilliant fan vid? Or just found a gem you want to share? Email psm3@futurenet.co.uk and tell us all about it.

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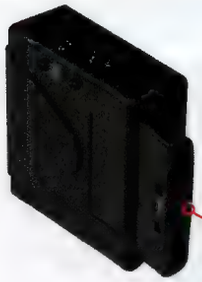

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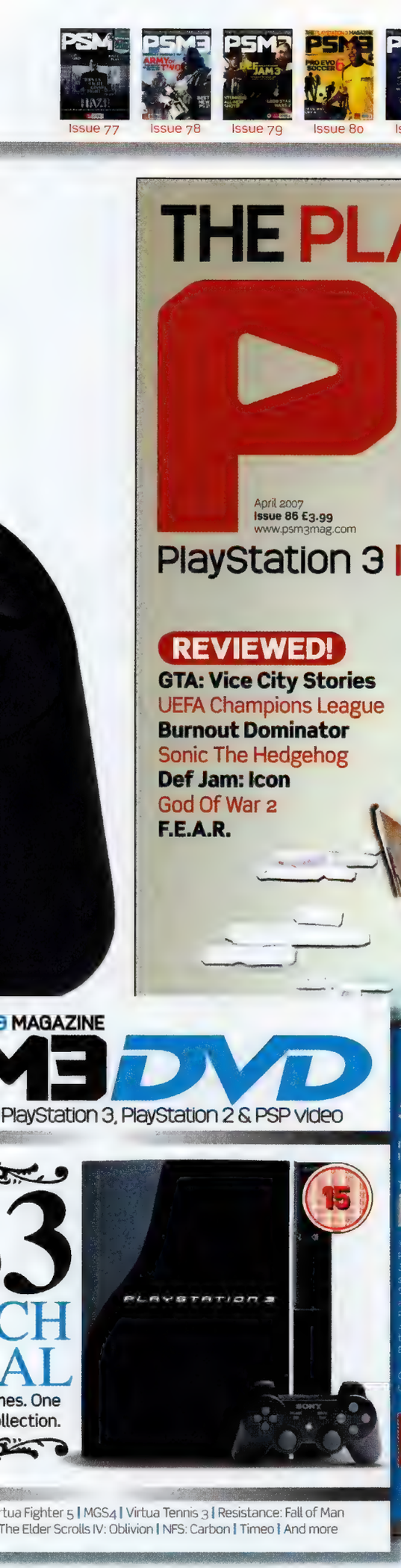
Burnout Dominator
Sonic The Hedgehog
Def Jam: Icon
God Of War 2
F.E.A.R.



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ISSUE 86 | APRIL

THE PLAYSTATION 3 MAGAZINE
PSM3

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Future

...s city-thrashing Hawk-beater exposed

PS3 LAUNCH SPECIAL

PS3's best games, top tech tips and tricks exposed over 16 info-rich pages

Sure, every games mag, website and blog has got the 'best' guide to PS3 with the 'hottest verdicts' on all the big games, but surely you deserve – no, *demand* – something more? As the UK's first, proudly independent PS3 magazine, we've had a Japanese machine for over three months now – so not only have we reviewed almost every UK launch game on import, we're in the unique position of telling you how we feel about them three months on, enabling you to make the most-informed buying decision possible.

Rather than just reprint pages of old reviews, we've sliced them down to the facts you *need*, listed any UK extras and re-appraised *every single game* available at PS3 launch – bar those delayed at the last minute – even going as far to alter our original scores where we feel we erred on the side of optimism, and using our superior knowledge of PS3's capabilities to re-evaluate the quality of the UK launch games. Now, if you'll be so kind...

UK Launch Special

"We've sliced reviews down to the facts you need"

INCLUDING

PS3 INSTANT EXPERT
Get your PS3 singing in ten minutes.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED
Your PS3's FAQs answered

23 HIDDEN THINGS PS3 CAN DO
Expert shortcuts and tips revealed

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Find a TV to suit your needs

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Follow our step-by-step guide

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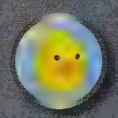


NETWORK GAMES
The best of the PS Store revealed

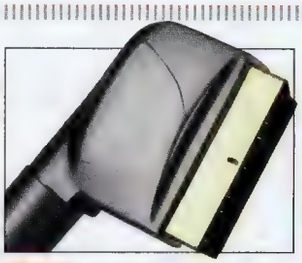
PS3 Instant Expert... in ten minutes flat

How to get your PS3 singing in double time

LEADS Get the best picture

StartHere Hooking up your PS3 to your TV is simple. The box will contain a standard composite cable/scart block but to get the best picture from your PS3, you'll need to buy one of the following cables and follow our set-up guide...

Composite The poorest quality lead, and bundled with PS3 – it won't show off the power of your PS3's graphics. Look for the red, white and yellow sockets on your TV then slot them home – for as long as it takes to adjust the display settings...



RGB SCART If you own a PS2, the chances are you'll be familiar with this cable. It usually plugs into the EXT1/EXT2 slot marked, oddly, Scart, and provides a brighter signal than composite, with greater contrast. But we'd advise using...

Component The entry level HD cable that's (theoretically) capable of pumping out 1080p visuals – it's the standard lead bundled with Xbox 360. Should set you back about £20 from most electrical retailers, but if your TV allows it...

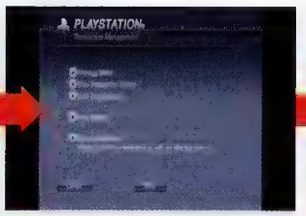
HDMI ... is the cable of choice, a pure digital connection that doesn't suffer from any analogue-induced slowdown. The cable will cost between £20-£80 but check your HDTV to make sure it's got a socket for HDMI before buying.

SIGN UP Getting online

StartHere Presuming you're broadband-enabled at home, then registering your PS3 is a piece of cake. Just make sure you've plugged in your Ethernet cable to the PS3 and the phone-line socket and your machine will auto-detect it.

Register Go all the way to the right-hand side of the menu and you'll find the option to sign-up for the PlayStation Network. Select this to be taken through the registration process. Make sure you've got your credit card and address handy.

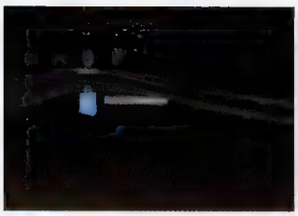
Avatar The final step of your registration is to choose your avatar, the picture that other users will see whenever you're online. There are 23 pages of icons to choose from including a lot of familiar PlayStation faces and symbols.



Funds Once you're fully signed up you can add some funds to your account so you can purchase from the PlayStation Store™. Click on the option displaying your name and avatar then choose Transaction Management.

Browser Your PS3 has a full web browser at your disposal. You can surf almost any site that you'd be able to on your home computer but the PS3 software doesn't support all music or videos from websites. You can still use YouTube, mind.

DOWNLOAD PlayStation Store



StartHere You've logged-in, registered your PS3 and now it's time to delve into the PlayStation Store™ to check out what's on offer. You can download free demos, movie trailers or some PSone games to play on PSP. This is how...

Front page The store is split into four different sections; Featured, Demos, Games and View All. Add items to your Shopping Cart by clicking on them, but it's best to be careful and check your list before finalising the transaction.

Demos This is your chance to get a taste of upcoming titles without having to splash your money on the full game. The demos are currently being drip-fed in Japan and the US but hopefully they'll be plentiful by the time of the UK launch.

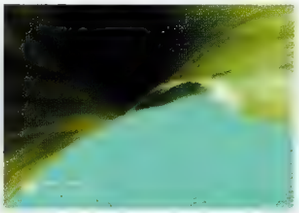
PSP games Sick of paying out for the latest disappointing PSP titles? Well now you can download, er, disappointing PSone games. Seriously though, you can get classics like *Coolboarders* and *Destruction Derby* for £3.

Movie trailers OK, so there's about a million places on the net where you can get movie trailers to view, but you can download them straight to your PS3 in glorious HD and make the most the new TV in the process.

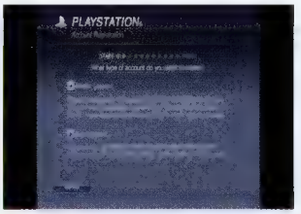
PRO USER Five Top Tips

USB keyboard and mouse While you can't use this setup to play games (yet?) you can hook them up to your PS3 and it'll recognise the peripherals instantly. Now you can look around the web and easily tap in text as you would a PC.

Play your music Unfortunately, your PS3 gets confused when an iPod is plugged in and it flings all the files around into random folders. Put a USB stick into it, hit ⓐ to display all and then search out individual tracks for the best results.



Find some friends When logged onto the Network finding friends is easy so long as you know their username. Just type in a message and enter the username into the 'To' field and your request will received by the next time the recipient logs-on.



Sub Account One for the parents here. If you're worried about little Johnny surfing the smut highway or spending your hard-earned cash then you can set up a separate account which you can control with passwords. Clever.

Store pictures You can use the PS3 to display your finest photos in stunning HD. Plug in a USB supported camera or memory stick, press ⓐ to 'view all' and access your pictures. You can use a slideshow to cycle through your snaps.

Your Questions Answered

We asked for your questions. You didn't disappoint...

Q What's the range of PS3's wireless? Our router is in the kitchen and my PS3 will be in the bedroom, will it reach?

A Let's gamble on a 'yes' here. We're assuming you're using an 802.11g router (often just called a 'G') which is more powerful than the 'B' system used by PSP, say. In our tests with our 'G' router the signal made it through two walls to get to our PS3 – that's a router in the kitchen, an empty dining room then a PS3 in the living room. This worked. As did a router in the kitchen and a PS3 in the bedroom 'diagonally' above. That's through a wall and a floor, then.

Really, it depends on the size of your house but provided your not trying to beam through more than two walls/floors the signal is strong enough.

Q Can I use my PS3 Linux to playback files in formats other than those supported by PS3?

A Yes. Once you get Linux up and running on your PS3 it's open season and any files prohibited by the PS3's 'Game OS' are welcomed with open arms. Take popular free media player VLC, for example. This prince among freeware media programs plays practically anything and – of course – there's a Linux Power PC version available on the net. Download VLC to your PS3 and you can play DixX, MOVs, AVIs all on the HD TV in your living room instead of your computer monitor.

Q Will I be able play high-definition files such as 720p and 1080p downloads?

A If they're MP4s then your Movie menu in the PS3 menu should have no problems (just as with movie trailers downloaded from the PS Store). However for anything other than MP4 you're going to have to convert them (see our last answer) or use a player in Linux (see page 59) to enjoy your files.

While the technology is sound, the sad fact that Sony have hobbled your PS3's Linux power comes home to roost in this particular case. Hi-def video playback is very processor intensive. PS3 has seven processors (cores) on board but any Linux installation is limited to use only two. This, plus banned access to the RSX graphics chip, means that Linux PS3 hasn't got enough power to play 720p files. We tried it: Our 350Mb downloads of Lost played just fine, but PS3 choked on the much fatter 720p download.

Q Can I upgrade the hard drive inside my PS3?

A Yes. See earlier for details. The important bits to look out for when buying a replacement drive are that it's 2.5inch (so it'll fit) and SATA (so it'll connect OK). A Google search for '2.5inch laptop SATA hard drive' will turn up countless places wanting to sell you a bigger one for about £60.

Q Will a Netgear dg384pn 108mbps Mimo Rangemax Wireless G router work fine with the PS3?

A We don't see why not. (Forgive us for not having that exact modem however...) For the record our PS3s find our US Robotics 9106 wireless ADSL modem/router and connected first time. The clever code inside the PS3 makes connecting to any unsecured router a breeze. Got problems – turn off your router's security. Not ideal but a guaranteed-to-work fix.

Q Am I better off connecting the PS3 wirelessly or via an Ethernet cable?

A Try wireless. If it doesn't work (and it's HIGHLY likely that PS3 will find and connect upon your first try) then go with the wire. That said, when trying to download a big 100Mb-plus system update our PS3/router lost wireless connection mid-way through and we had to start again. If you're downloading something meaty and important you may want to have the additional security of a safe, unbreakable wired connection.

Q Is it theoretically possible to bypass the RSX hypervisor through Linux without the use of additional hardware?

A You mean bypass Sony's barriers, get at the RSX chip and program your own MotorStorm-rivalling driving game? Yes. Anything is possible, but, in much the same way that you could build yourself a rocket and be the first charred corpse on Mars – we'd say 'no'. Sorry.

Q Have PS3 games been 'hacked'? If so will I be able to download them for free?

A No they haven't and no you can't. There are plenty of claims on the net (and a video of a guy running *Ridge Racer 7* from his hard drive) but there's very little actual proof that it can be done. We say not, and you can bet that this is one part of the PS3's 'open architecture' that Sony will shut down even before it happens...

Q Can two PS3s connect to each other locally? Can we play two-player full screen with two TV's? Can we play 14-player games using the same method?

A In theory, yes – the inclusion of the Ethernet socket on the back of PS3 means that its brains can be fired down a wire and shared with another PS3. At present though there are no games that offer such a 'link-up' option simply because there won't be that many houses with two PS3's... Still it's technically possible and we look forward to see if any game use it.

23 Amazing PS3 Tips

It's the hidden PS3 manual. Be a PS3 power-user in minutes.

1 Play games from any country

It's true. Unlike PS2 you can now buy games from anywhere in the world and play them on your UK PS3 – there's no region encoding. We recommend American games, though, because they'll be in English. Note: This only applies to PS3 games – not PSone and PS2 games.

2 Play movies from any country

Just as with games (above) Blu-ray movies are region-free too. Play any Blu-ray on your UK PS3. However, your UK PS3 WON'T like American or Japanese DVDs. Your UK machine doesn't support the NTSC video format they use.

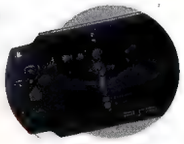
3 Wake your PS3 up by remote control

Here's a cool trick. Shut down your PS3 (by holding the pad's central PS button) but keep the power switch at the back set to 'on' and your PS3 will be sat ready and waiting on stand-by. The red light on the front shows that it's still 'there'. Now turn on a pad (by pressing the PS button) and your PS3 will spark up, ready to link with it.

4 The secret video reset

Taken your PS3 round your mate's house? Or simply moved from living room to bedroom? Unable to see your PS3's picture because you can't change your TV settings? Simple fix: Shut down your PS3, then restart by pressing and holding the power button. This will reset your PS3 to basic 480p graphics mode so you'll be able to see enough to choose RGB SCART, component or HDMI connections.

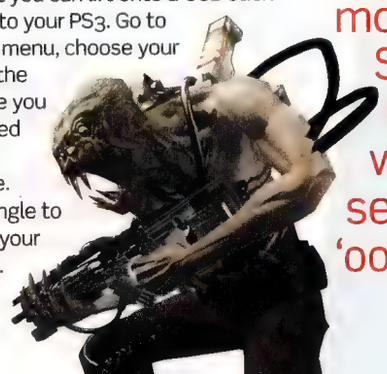
5 Broadcast to your PSP



On your PSP go to Settings, then Network Settings, Infrastructure Mode, New Connection, Enter Manual. Go to SSID and call this new connection something obvious - like 'PS3'. Go to the WLAN Security Setting and edit the SPA-PSK (AES) setting. Enter the WPA key, this is an eight-letter password to identify your PS3 - we suggest 'password'. On the PS3 go Settings, Network Settings, Remote Play Connection Settings. Enter the same SSID name (ie, 'PS3') and enter the same WPA key (ie, 'password'). Almost done. Go to Network on your PS3, choose Remote Play. It'll start looking for your PSP. Pick up your PSP and go to Network and select Remote Play on your PSP. Your PS3's menus will now appear on your PS3's screen. Drive around with the PSP D-pad.

6 Get game saves off the internet

Stuck on a game? Chances are someone out there has already beaten that boss for you and saved their game afterwards. Google 'PS3 game saves'. There are hundreds of finished and half-finished game saves all over the internet. Download the save you want – it'll come in a 'PS3' folder that you can lift onto a USB stick and put into your PS3. Go to the Game menu, choose your stick and the game save you downloaded should be right there. Press Triangle to copy it to your hard drive.



7 Customise your slide shows

During a photo slide-show move the right stick on the Sixaxis to zoom in on images and to alter the speed of the playback.

8 Install another operating system

Yes, turn your PS3 into a fully featured Linux-based computer. See page 51 for more.

9 Make free video phone calls via USB headset

You'll need a USB headset (like the one you use in PS2 SOCOM) and an EyeToy camera. Plug in both via USB and go to your Friends menu. Choose a friend and press △. Choose Start New Chat and type a message (Something like 'Videochat?'). Now, providing they're in front of their PS3 (perhaps text them in advance?) they'll see your message and have the option to accept your videochat. Now, provided they have a camera and headset, two windows will open showing yourself and your mate. Hit △ again to invite more people (up to six).

10 Browse multiple Internet windows at once

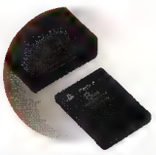
Open the browser (go to Network) and surf to a page you want. Now open up the menu with a press of △ and choose Open In New Window. Enter another URL and then do the same again. Keep going until you've got six windows open. Now press L3 (done by clicking down the left stick). You're now in multi-page mode. Move the left stick to flick through the web pages and L3 to zoom in.

11 Hack any password

Using a PS3 that has been locked out of internet access or movie playback? Go to System, System Settings and choose Restore Default Settings. This will reset all settings, including setting the password back to 'oooo' (four zeroes).

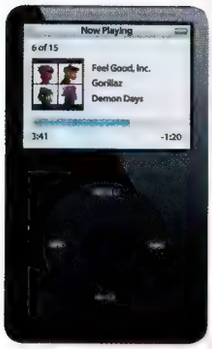
12 Get your PS2 game saves onto your PS3

There's only one way: The official Sony PS3 Memory Card Adapter. Plug this small box into your PS3 and you can plug your cards into it and copy the saves across. The £10-to-£15 price tag seems steep but once you've copied your card(s) you'll never need it again, meaning you can sell it on. Why not share one with a group of mates?



13 Download music and pics (and save them on your hard drive)

Simple, this. Just click on the file you want and, provided that it's in a format recognised by PS3, it'll be downloaded and stored in the right place on your PS3. MP3 files go into your Music folder and images go into Photos. Watch out for any file compressed as a zip file though. Your PS3 can't unzip and won't know what to do with them – it's uncompressed files only here.



14 Force PS3 to show your stuff

Put your photos in a folder called 'PICTURE' or your videos in a folder called 'VIDEO' or simply *force* your PS3 to look at your files on your stick regardless of what you called them or where you put them. Insert your stick and go to the menu option you want (Photos, Music, whatever). Press △ to bring up a menu and choose Display All. This will show every file on the stick. It even works for a plugged-in iPod, though the multi-folder structure you'll reveal is a bit baffling. Still, your songs are in there if you've got the patience to find them.

15 See how much charge is on your pad

Never be caught short again. Press and hold the PS button on any joypad. An on-screen indicator will appear, showing your pad's charge as a small battery. A full battery pic means a fully-charged pad.

16 Have a light show

Select a music track from your Music menu then press △ to bring up the control panel. Choose the second icon in on the top row and press ⊗ (it looks like a planet – two interlocking loops). This will full-frame the 'music visualizer'. Enjoy.

17 Play any video format on PS3

Download PSPvideo9 to your PC (free from www.pspvideo9.com). Use the program to convert your AVIs, MOVs, DivX and WMA files to MP4 format. You can even convert VOB files (which you'll find in the Video TS folder on your DVDs). Now make a folder on a USB stick called 'PS3' and inside that one make a folder called 'VIDEO'. Drag your new MP4 files to this folder and put the stick in your PS3. Head to the Movie folder on your PS3 and select the stick. You'll see your (formerly banned) files there ready for playback.

18 Manage your online cash

Go to Friends and choose Account Management to see your downloads so far and get the option to add more funds to your online wallet – useful if you're using your parents' credit card rather than having a wallet-less account of your own registered...

19 Store all your stuff

Want to back-up your data? Perhaps in readiness for a spot of Linux? (see later). Head to Settings, Back-up Utility. Your PS3 will now try and find devices connected to your PS3, to use as a back up location. Any cards inserted in slots (USB sticks, Compact Flash, MS Pro Duo or SD card) will be found. Likewise any external hard drives plugged into USB.

20 Use your PS2 pads

You can buy a USB joypad adapter (available for PCs) to use your PS2 pads on your PS3, but rumble-free.

21 Change your album art

When you import a music CD your PS3 automatically pulls down the album art and stores it with the tracks. Occasionally it gets it wrong, however, or it may simply not be able to find the art of your hipper, less commercial tracks. This is easily fixed however. Download a pic of the art you need as a jpg on your PC and put it onto a stick (in a folder called PICTURE, ideally). Copy it to your Photo menu (press △). Now go to Music and select the album folder with the offending art. Press △ and select Information. Go to the Photo menu and select your new picture. Bingo.

22 Share your downloads

You can download anything you've bought from the store to five PlayStation 3's – useful if you've got more than one PS3, or if you've wiped your hard-drive and don't fancy paying for the same download twice... However, you can also share your download with your mates. The PlayStation Store logs how many times each download has been made by each user. On your mate's PS3 Create New User and log onto the store with your ID. You'll now be able to go to your download(s) and see what you've paid for. You can now download it again, using another of your downloads and give it to your mate for free.

23 Upgrade your PS3's hard drive

We took the drive out of our PS3 and found it to be a Seagate Momentus 5400rpm 60Gb 2.5inch SATA drive. We swapped ours out effortlessly for a Seagate Momentus 120Gb 2.5inch SATA drive and it worked perfectly. Remove the cover flap on the bottom of your PS3 with a fingernail. Undo the blue screw and slide the drive over to the right and out of your PS3. Undo the four screws on the 'caddy' and remove the old drive. Put your new drive in the caddy (it should be exactly the same size, of course) and re-do the four screws. Slot it back in and slide to the left to make the connections. Re-do the blue screw, pop the cover back on and restart your PS3. Say 'yes' to the message on screen and voila – new super-size hard-drive. (Go to Settings, System Settings, System Information to check.)

What HDTV should I buy?

What Video & High-Definition TV
All our ratings are from sister magazine What Video and HDTV, with best prices from comparison sites like www.pricerunner.co.uk

Your old TV is fine, but if *fine* isn't good enough...

Is hi-def worth the money? What's 1080p? Is LCD better than plasma? Here's all your HDTV questions answered and best TVs revealed – at prices to suit every budget.

SAVE IT! SUB £500

Best Buy

Samsung LE-19R71B

Price: £250 | **Rating:** ★★★★ | **Size:** 19" | **Resolution:** 1440 x 990 | **LCD/Plasma:** LCD | **Sockets:** DVI, Composite, Component, DMI, HDMI, S-Video, Scart (x2)

Comments: Not the *best* picture quality (see below), but impressive, with great connectivity at a bargain price – an ideal bedroom TV.

Recommended

Panasonic TX26LXD60
Price: £553 | **Rating:** ★★★★★ | **Size:** 26" | **Resolution:** 1366 x 768 | **LCD/Plasma:** LCD
Sockets: Composite, Component, HDMI (x2), Scart (x2)
Comments: A shade over budget, but with two HDMI slots, great picture quality and in-built freeview TV tuner, this is a great buy.

Toshiba 26WLT66
Price: £540 | **Rating:** ★★★★★ | **Size:** 26" | **Resolution:** 1366 x 768 | **LCD/Plasma:** LCD
Sockets: Composite, Super Video In, Component, HDMI (x2), Scart (x2)
Comments: Active Vision Processing (don't ask) or not, the picture's *slightly* richer than the Panasonic – but there's little to choose.

SPEND IT! £500-£1200

Best Buy

Panasonic Viera TH37PX600

Price: £1190 | **Rating:** ★★★★ | **Size:** 37" | **Resolution:** 1024 x 720 | **LCD/Plasma:** LCD | **Sockets:** Composite, Super Video In, Component, HDMI (x2), Scart (x3)

Comments: Panasonic's V-Real picture processing technology really shines on this superior plasma, with richer blacks and greater screen contrast.

Recommended

Toshiba 37WLT66
Price: £711 | **Rating:** ★★★★ | **Size:** 37" | **Resolution:** 1366 x 768 | **LCD/Plasma:** LCD |
Sockets: DVI, Composite, Component, DMI, HDMI (x2), S-Video, Scart (x2)
Comments: Ever so slightly disappointing by Toshiba's lofty standards, but hugely connectible – a bargain price for such a big TV.

Sony KDL-32V2000
Price: £1000 | **Rating:** ★★★★ | **Size:** 32" | **Resolution:** 1366 x 768 | **LCD/Plasma:** LCD |
Sockets: DVI, Composite, Component, DMI, HDMI (x1), S-Video, Scart (x2)
Comments: Superb picture, but pricey for a relatively small TV with only one HDMI input.

SPLURGE IT! £1000+

Best Buy

Sony KDL-40W2000

Price: £1400 | **Rating:** ★★★★★ | **Size:** 40" | **Resolution:** 1920 x 1080 | **LCD/Plasma:** LCD | **Sockets:** Composite (x2), Component, HDMI (x2), S-Video, Scart (x2), VGA (x1)

Comments: Typical Sony build quality with an exemplary 1080p picture – perfect for PS3. Decent connectivity, at a decent price, too.

Recommended

Pioneer PDP-5000EX
Price: £4900 | **Rating:** ★★★★★ | **Size:** 50" | **Resolution:** 1920 x 1080 | **LCD/Plasma:** Plasma
Sockets: DVI, Composite, Component, HDMI (x2), S-Video, Scart
Comments: The world's first 1080p 50" plasma – staggering picture quality, at a staggering price. First choice, if you can afford it – which we certainly can't.

Sharp LC42XD1E
Price: £1150 | **Rating:** ★★★★★ | **Size:** 42" | **Resolution:** 1920 x 1080 **LCD/Plasma:** LCD
Sockets: Composite, Component (via VGA), HDMI (x2), S-Video, Scart (x2), VGA
Comments: Not much between this and the Sony. It's the 1080p TV we've used to review games this issue, but so sharp up close, games *almost* look worse than standard 720p sets.

PSM3 Reckons 1080p isn't *that* much better than 720p on smaller sets. We'd recommend a mid-range 32" 720p LCD set for about £600, like the Toshiba 32WLT66, or Panasonic TX-32LXD60 (owned by Dan D and Milf) – but if you've got the budget, go for the 1080p, future proof, Sony KDL-40W2000. Bottom line – playing PS3 in 720p HD is better than playing on a CRT with Scart leads, but 1080p only shines on 42"+ HDTVs.

PS3 JARGON EXPLAINED

What's Hi-Definition (HD) TV?

A Hi-Definition signal displays a minimum 1280 (horizontal) x 720 (vertical) pixels (known as a 720p signal), compared to the standard 576 (vertical) pixels of regular broadcast UK (PAL) TV. Basically, it looks much sharper, like comparing a PC game to a regular PS2 title.

1080p vs 720p

PS3 can display 'True HD' 1080p signals (1080 vertical pixels) on a compatible TV set, which will cost about £1200 – all Blu-ray films are 1080p. To be honest, it's not *much* better than 720p. Don't forget, most HDTVs can display a 1080i image (the 'i' means interlaced), which has the same number of pixels as 1080p (the 'p' stands for progressive). 1080p is 'better' because the screen 'refreshes' in one pass, while an interlaced image has to do a double 'interlaced' pass in the same time, albeit at mega high speed – that's why a 1080p image looks smoother and more 'solid', even though it has the same number of pixels. It's a bit like the difference between games running in 30fps and 60fps.

What's HDMI?

A High Definition Multimedia Interface – it's the best cable for getting the optimum picture from PS3, and costs upwards of £25. Your second best choice is a Component lead (as used by Xbox 360) that also provides a HD signal, but not quite as good. If your TV allows it, go for HDMI. Typically, it doesn't come bundled with PS3 – you only get crappy non-HD composite leads as standard, just like PS2.

Plasma vs LCD

It's too technical, and boring, to explain but Plasma TVs are more like traditional CRT TVs, using a phosphor screen lit with electric currents, while LCD TV's are just like traditional PC monitors, with a dot-matrix screen consisting of actual pixels. What does this mean? Plasma screens traditionally display 'richer' images, with greater contrast between colours and deep blacks, but are bigger, heavier and consume more power. LCDs are sharper and lighter, but with slightly washed out colours, and are – traditionally – worse with regular broadcast TV. As technology improves, the difference between LCD and Plasma is negligible, as a general rule, buy LCD for TV's between 19-40" and Plasma for 40" or bigger.

What's Blu-ray?

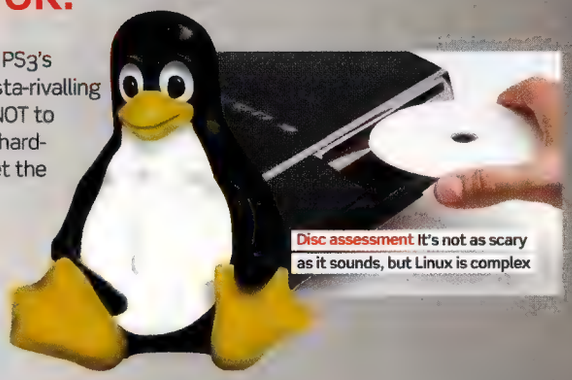
The 'next-generation' of DVDs, running in crystal clear 1080p, that hold 25Gb of data (50Gb on double layer discs) compared to 7Gb on DVD. They allow PS3 games to store more data, too, making it an ideal format for big games like *Final Fantasy*.

Royale family The first 500,000 to sign up for PS3 online get Bond on Blu-ray for free.

Install Linux On Your PS3

Turn your PS3 into a computer. Mr Sony says it's OK.

Yes. Incredibly, Sony are freely distributing a small program that opens your PS3's mind wide open – a tiny shoe-in that will allow you to install a whole new Vista-rivalling computer operating system onto your PS3. And best of all it's guaranteed NOT to mangle your PS3's game brains, occupying a separate 10Gb portion of your hard-drive. It's a zero-risk thing and we recommend that anyone who wants to get the most out of their PS3 should give it a try – no spanners required.



Disc assessment It's not as scary as it sounds, but Linux is complex

Linux does these good things!

☑ **Run MAME - the classic videogame emulator**
Play arcade classics and [whispers] games from other consoles... Check out www.emuhq.com for more.

☑ **Play any media file**
Download the VLC media player for Linux from http://www.videolan.org/vlc/

☑ **Get any TV show**
Download the PowerPC Linux BitTorrent program (www.bittorrent.com) and then gorge yourself at http://eztvefnet.org/

But also does these bad things...

☒ Installing Linux on your PS3 will blank your hard-drive and return your PS3 to day-one freshness. Got a load of game saves on there? Back them up to USB stick before formatting your 'drive, eh?

☒ Your PS3 will start up in scary Linux mode until you switch it back again. No great hardship but the Linux start-up (a screen full of 1970s computer jargon) will scare the willies out of you every time you see it.

☒ You have to sacrifice 10Gb of disc space. PS3 Linux craps royally on ten whole Gb of your disc – but the good news is that it leaves the remaining 50Gb and your PS3's 'Game OS' – aka the familiar XMB interface with Photos, Music and whatever – completely untouched.

☒ You'll need a USB keyboard, mouse and an HD TV to get involved. Most Linux installs default to computer-style 720p output.

☒ Downloading and building your Linux install disc will require a PC with a DVD burner and for you to find a suitable install file lurking out there on the 'net.

How To Install Linux

Eight (techy) steps to OS happiness...

1 Download and run the PS3 'Other OS' Installer...

Download if from here: **http://www.playstation.com/ps3-openplatform/data/otheros.self.**

2 Get your Linux bootloader

This is a file called a '.bld' file. Whichever flavour of Linux you're going for will have its own 'otheros.bld' file. Need help? Check step four for a specific example.

3 Put the two files together

Make a folder on your computer called 'PS3'. Make another folder inside that one called 'otheros'. Now put your otheros.self file and your otheros.bld file inside this folder. Now copy the folder to a USB stick.

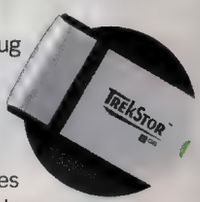
4 Download your Linux

Which do you fancy? We've seen Fedora Core 5 running on PS3 and Sony themselves back a Linux called Yellow Dog Linux. Whichever you fancy the .iso file is out there on the net, waiting to be downloaded, burnt to a disc and force-fed into your PS3.

For Fedora Core 5 download the bordeaux-DVD-ppc.torrent bittorrent file from **http://torrent.fedoraproject.org/.** Also download the PS3 Linux Add-On Packages CD from **ftp://ftp.uk.linux.org/pub/linux/Sony-PS3/CELL-Linux-CL_20061110-ADDON.iso.** Both these files will give you '.iso' files – these are disc images and should be burnt, unaltered, onto discs. (The PS3 Linux add-on package contains the otheros.bld you'll need for the install by the way.)

5 Prepare your PS3

WARNING: This will wipe your PS3 so back up anything you value now. Ready? Go to Settings, System Settings, Format and format the drive with 10Gb set aside for Linux.



When that's done plug in your USB stick and go to 'Install Other OS'. With any luck it'll find your otheros.self and otheros.bld files and load them. Now go to 'Default OS' also in the System menu and change this to 'Other OS'. Your PS3 is now ready to install your new operating system alongside your PS3 game OS.

6 Install your other OS

Restart your PS3... And welcome to Linux (aka a scary command prompt). Insert your Linux install disc (the disc you made of the .iso file from the bordeaux torrent). Key in 'install-fc sda' (without the quotes) and hit return. Choose 'full install' and say 'yes' to any questions. Enter a memorable 'root password' when asked. Now comes the waiting...

After about an hour and a half you'll be asked for the Add-On Packages CD. Change the discs and continue. Got a scary command prompt? That's good! Your install is finished.

7 Go Linux

Type 'reboot' and your PS3 will restart. Ignore the compu-crap all over the screen and log in as root with the password you entered during the install. Right now your PS3 is running in standard-def resolution. To see your new flashy desktop however, you'll need to go hi-def.

Type in 'ps3videomode -v 3' the '3' bit tells the Linux to switch to 720p. If you have problems (ie, your TV won't display a picture after this point) try restarting and trying a different number: 2 is 480p, 4 is 1080i, 5 is 1080p. Try googling 'fedora ps3videomode' for a full list of numbers if you need them.

Hopefully your PS3 will switch mode and your TV will keep up. You're ready... Type 'startx' and hit Return to start Linux. This is a very typical (and popular) Linux and there's loads of documentation and programs out there on the net. Go have fun.

8 Switching back

Want to go back to PS3 land? Next time you restart your PS3 type in 'boot-game-os'. This will return you to the XMB interface every restart from now on. Want Linux again? Change 'Default OS' in the System Menu to 'Other OS' and restart. Geddit?

Help! Abort! Emergency!
Things gone wrong? Hold the power button on your PS3 to force a shut down. Release it, then press *and hold* it again to restart. Keep your finger on for about five secs and you'll get a re-assuring beep. Panic over.

The Launch Games Reviewed

Which games are worthy of your cash? Read on...

What's been added?

Online multi-player for up to 12 people?	✓
Extras, including bonus movies?	✓
Faster, smoother and more detailed visuals?	✓
New courses, cars and music?	✗

MotorStorm

New UK online mode boosts Sony's muddy racer

What we said then

"In every race you're running a chaotic gauntlet of erratic physics, hostile AI and dangerous muddy slop. And it demands intense concentration because no two races are ever the same – by the third lap the course will have been carved and smeared into a brown sludge with objects blocking every turn. It's tough, dynamic racing and a blistering thrill ride that makes good on PlayStation 3's promises."

PSM3 Issue 83 | 88%

What we say now

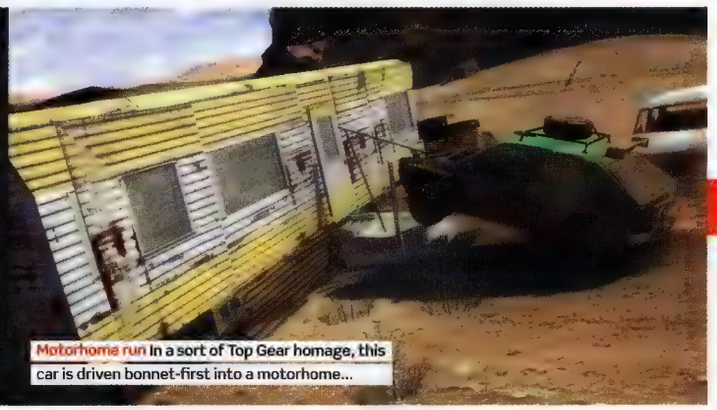
The game is just as impressive as it was back when we reviewed the Japanese version, if not more so thanks to improved visuals, smoother racing and, of course, online play. We could only organise a small race with a few fellow journalists, but the lack of lag and slowdown was impressive. Creating a race is simple; choose the course, the time of day, the vehicles your opponents are allowed to choose and how many laps. Then you race. Easy. In fact, they're the simplest online menus we've seen in a PS3 game yet. As for the single-player mode; we aren't quite as enthralled with it as we were at the beginning. It's still chaotic and unpredictable, but we're thirsting for more tracks. Luckily, Evolution are planning to release some over the PlayStation network sometime soon. We hope they're free of charge.

■ Limited, yes, but the frantic online play and true next-gen physics keep it well ahead of the pack. Not genre-defining, but still ace.

88

The PS3 Difference

MotorStorm's chaotic physics and destruction simply wouldn't be possible on PS2. Without them, it's just another off-road racer. But when you're sliding around in the mud knocking other vehicles into scenery it feels like a genuinely new experience. Momentum, pressure, weight and every other property you care to mention all come in to play, and it's as demented as the real thing. Here's a good example of the particle physics...



Motorhome run In a sort of Top Gear homage, this car is driven bonnet-first into a motorhome...

PS3 Reviews

"Just as impressive as it was when we reviewed the Japanese import version"

Ridge Racer 7

The glory fades

What we said then

"Impossible to fault, but the feeling of déjà vu puts a downer on PS3's power. There are more tracks than you could possibly need and the extra screen resolution allows everything to be so much sharper than before. In fact, it's one of the first PS3 games to 'do' true 1080p at 60fps."

PSM3 Issue 83 | 80%

What we say now

Online racing on the Japanese network is a bit miserable since everyone seems to be a *R7* veteran – but that's our failing. The slick arcade racing is as irresistable as ever, despite the repetitive career mode. Plus it's in 1080p – good to show off high-spec HDTVs.

79

Ridge too far? Sliding around bends as the taillights blur into an S-shaped laser trail feels very next-gen.

Need For Speed Carbon

Actually worse on PS3

What we said then

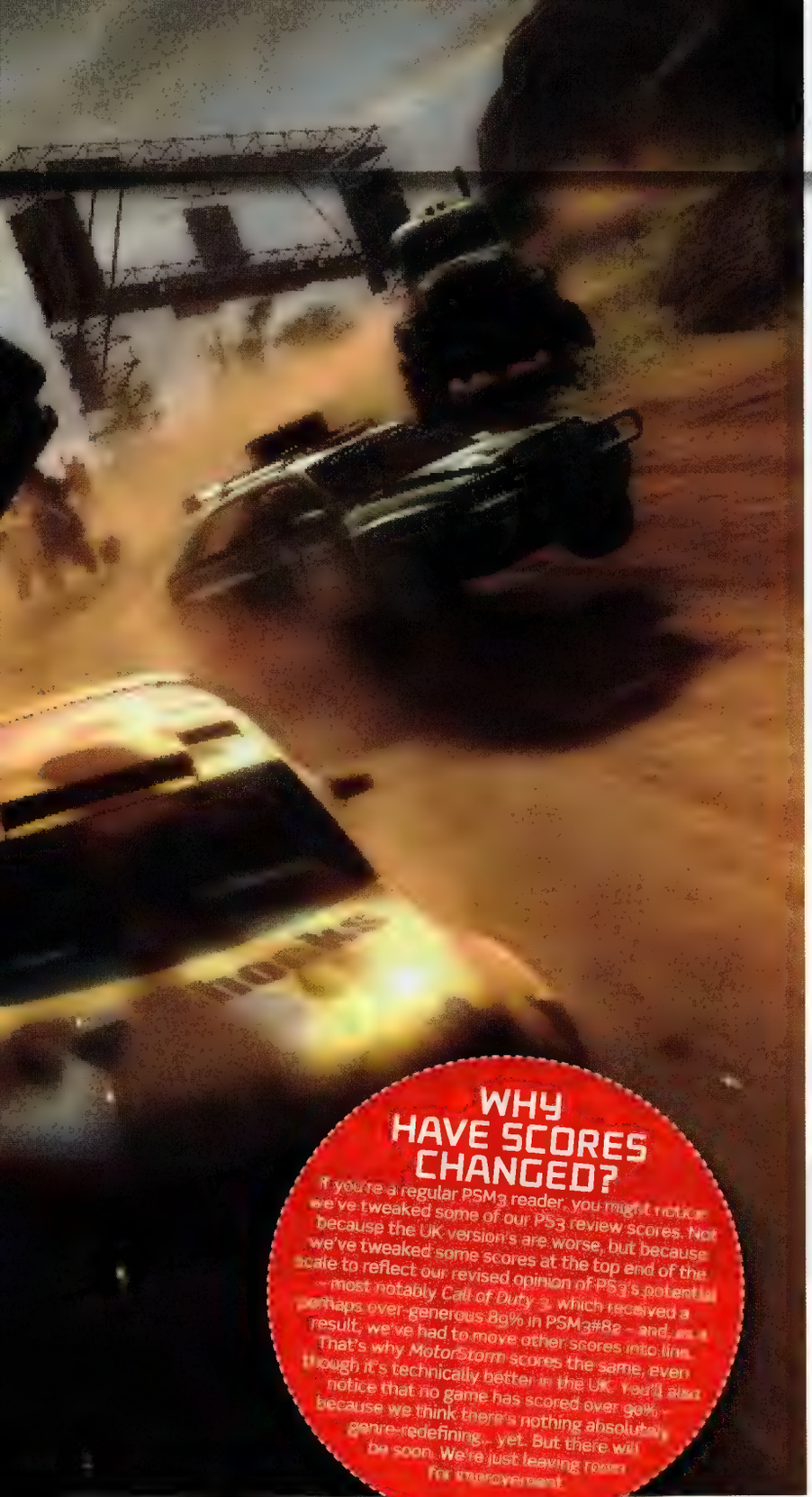
"Get the PS2 version instead and save your money for a real next-gen racer. The gameplay still shines as you progress through the races, but we can't recommend this as any way to show off your PS3."

PSM3 Issue 83 | 58%

What we say now

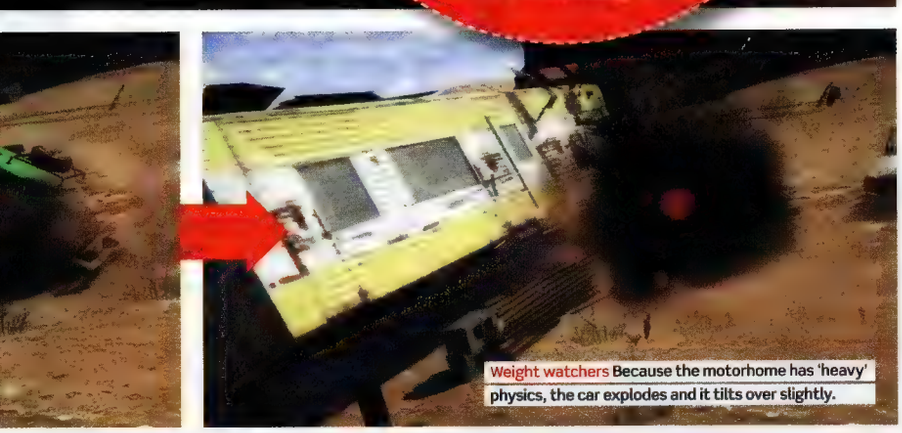
To be honest, we've hardly played this since the review. We had our fill of the decent PS2 version and this is barely any different. It really does look like a souped-up, high-res port of the PS2 game and feels cheap and rushed. And the online play is a laggy disaster.

58



WHY HAVE SCORES CHANGED?

If you're a regular PSM3 reader, you might notice we've tweaked some of our PS3 review scores. Not because the UK version's are worse, but because we've tweaked some scores at the top end of the scale to reflect our revised opinion of PS3's potential – most notably *Call of Duty 3*, which received a perhaps over-generous 89% in PSM3#82 – and, as a result, we've had to move other scores into line. That's why *MotorStorm* scores the same, even though it's technically better in the UK. You'll also notice that no game has scored over 90%, because we think there's nothing absolutely genre-redefining... yet. But there will be soon. We're just leaving room for improvement.



Weight watchers Because the motorhome has 'heavy' physics, the car explodes and it tilts over slightly.

The PS3 Difference

The Cheddar Gorge driving section? The swooping twilight towers of Nottingham? The 40-player frantic online deathmatches? Actually, our defining moment is one of the weapons: the air-fuel grenade. PS2 would struggle to emulate its gas-fizzing detonation effect, let alone the number of swarming insects you're called to use it on. Lethal, since the smoke stays wafting around until a spark lights it up and toasts all in sight.

Resistance Fall Of Man

PS3's best game? Ye-es. But only just.

What we said then

"Too hard at times, but this beautiful vision of an alien-infested Britain makes for a great shooter. For their first stab at a first-person shooter, Insomniac have produced an incredibly slick, exciting PS3 showcase. The only problem is the story which doesn't flow very well, and there's no real sense of achievement for finishing a level."

PSM3 Issue 83 | 90%

New for the UK?

New multi-player maps to download?	✓
Expanded single-player missions?	✓
Online servers set aside for Europeans?	✓
New content bundled with the game itself?	✗

What we say now

PS3's flagship title might not be the killer-app everyone hoped for, but stick with it, and you'll be hooked – even when the later levels leave you howling in frustration. We've completed it and fragged countless online noobs, but three months on, we're hardly playing it anymore. Unless you're an obsessive, the 10-12 hour single-player has limited replay value. Truly memorable set-pieces are few, and the relative lack of vehicle action is disappointing, but *Resistance's* inventive weapons – love that slo-mo sniper rifle - save the day. If you're sick of WWII – a bit like us – it's a fresher, more compelling experience than *Call of Duty3*.

■ Limited, but frantic online play, next-gen physics and great weapons save the day.

89

Genji: Days Of The Blade

PSM3 Issue 83 | 60%

What we say now

Time has passed and... *Genji's* still not very good. The static camera angles (forcing you to fight off-screen foes), tedious fighting and giant crustaceans fail to engage. Odder yet; the first *Genji* on PS2 was great, with a combat system almost as good as *Onimusha's*. What a shame. Was it rushed? Maybe.

60

The Godfather Dons Edition

PSM3 Issue 86 | 66%

What we say now

Dress it up as you might, this is basically a slightly nicer-looking version of the very average PS2 game from last year. Full review on page 86.

66

Tony Hawk's Project 8

PSM3 Issue 83 | 80%

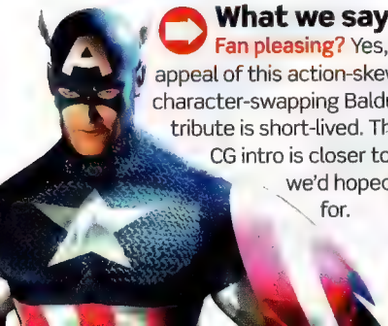
What we say now

It's still good, and the only skating game on PS3, but we just don't play it with the zeal we reserved for the PS2 games. Maybe it's the slightly hit-and-miss mission objectives, or the lack of genuine innovations – save the quite-good Nail The Trick mode. Multi-player HORSE is great, mind.

80

Marvel Ultimate Alliance

PSM3 Issue 84 | 78%



What we say now

Fan pleasing? Yes, but the appeal of this action-skewed, character-swapping Baldur's Gate tribute is short-lived. The epic CG intro is closer to what we'd hoped for.

72

Virtua Fighter 5

The technical master returns

What we said then

"Best scrapper ever? Perhaps, but it's such an acquired taste. Great, but not for everyone. Add another five or six percent to the score below if you're a massive fan of the genre."

PSM3 Issue 85 | 87%

What we say now

We're still upset about the lack of online play – although our freelance expert/obsessive assures us it only needs a VF Rankings link-up. *VF5* is still the finest, most polished beat-'em-up, probably ever, with an incredibly subtle array of moves, and counter-moves. A fine game.

87

Gunner get you The vehicles are a welcome addition to the multiplayer action. Just don't get blown up.

Call Of Duty 3

When will this war end?

What we said then

"The next-gen starts here. Great looks gel with genius game design. Call of Duty 3 looks frikkin' amazing on PS3. Once you see this version there will be no going back. Make sure COD3 is part of your artilery on PS3".

PSM3 Issue 82 | 89%

What we say now

Over scored? Yes, but it was the first PS3 game we reviewed (the score was hotly argued at the time) and, now we've seen what PS3 can do, we expect a bit more. Token Sixaxis rifle-butting bits barely enhance this OK'ish Xbox 360 port's charms. Good online, mind.

82

Enchanted Arms

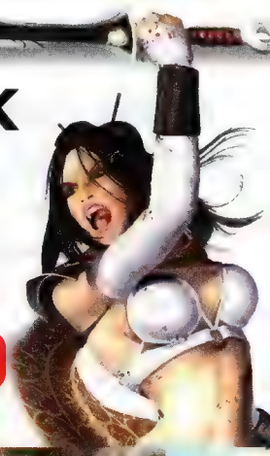
Ok'ish RPG evades review.

What we say now

Another RPG, delayed last minute, so review next issue. It's more traditional than *Oblivion*, set in a world besieged by golems. The battle system's turn-based like *Final Fantasy*, with an elemental magic system. It averaged 60%+ scores on Xbox 360 BTW.

Untold Legends: DK

So-so action RPG.



What we said then

"Decent action RPG, but makes you wonder why you were excited about PS3"

What we say now

If you want a deep RPG, get *Oblivion* – for action, *Marvel Ultimate Alliance*.

59

The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion

A game so big, we didn't have time to review it

What we say now

One of the few PS3 launch games we can't review yet – partly since it's been delayed, but largely because we need *loads* more time to do it justice. It really is epic; perhaps the biggest game ever made. A single map region can be the size of the *whole* of *San Andreas* and there are hundreds of thousands of quests, NPCs, dungeons and secrets to be discovered. Sure, it's a bit 'beardy' and Tolkien-esque in design and feel, but even if you're not particularly keen on elves and swords and pixies, persevere because this is as rewarding as games get. On PS3 it looks splendid, running at 1080p and sharper than the tip of a dark elf's sword. And not only that, but we get the formerly PC-only expansion pack *Knights of the Nine*, expanding the game's lifespan by another fifty hours. To give you an idea of how big *Oblivion* is, someone in our office building has played it for over 160 hours. Crikey.

Different strokes It's the same as the Xbox 360 game, but with sharper looks and a bonus mission pack.

F.E.A.R

Only of the so-so port.

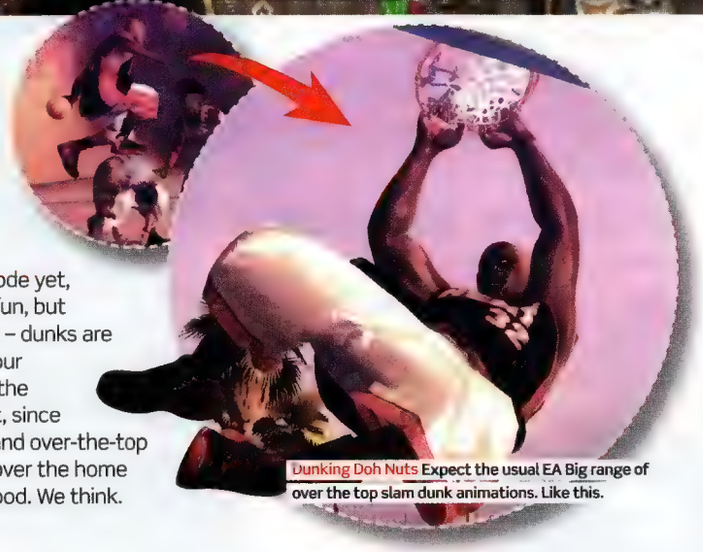
What we say now

Furious, brutal combat let down by bland environments and bad pacing. Most of the game takes place in an office block and as such is a rhapsody in grey. Compared to something like *Resistance* with its alien-infested streets and *Call of Duty's* war-torn France, it just isn't very exciting. It doesn't even look very good, despite PS3 being several times more powerful than the two-year-old PCs it was originally designed to run on. Online play is OK, and we love the slo-mo stuff.

72

NBA Street: Homecourt

Dunk and disorderly



What we say now

We haven't received PAL review code yet, but Stateside reports suggest that it's fun, but maddeningly tough to score open shots – dunks are the only way to score points because your opponents can jump so high – and that the graphics flicker. We'll reserve judgement, since the beautiful animation, stylish design and over-the-top special moves do appeal. You can take over the home courts of seasoned NBA pros, too. Er, good. We think.

Dunking Doh Nuts Expect the usual EA Big range of over the top slam dunk animations. Like this.

DELAYED?! Splinter Cell wasn't available for review at time of going to press – latest is that it's slipped to early April. Expect a full review next issue.

Splinter Cell Double Agent

Fisher faces moral choices, female spies.

What we say now

Chances are you've played the PS2 version, and while the PS3 game is fundamentally the same, characters looks bulkier, and environments sharper, with notable draw distances and subtle sunlight diffusion effects – with levels on dazzling glaciers, or swirling city deserts. In truth, it's near-identical to the Xbox 360 game, but we do get a PS3 exclusive female spy – a goggle-sporting Seven of Nine (from Star Trek) lookalike – for use in multi-player. Moral branching plot is neat, too.

PSM3 Issue N/A | TBC% (Review Next Issue)

Def Jam: Icon

Worse than the PS2 game.

What we say now

EA's disappointing hip-hop brawler not only fails to "re-invent the genre", as its developers claimed, but is actually worse than the excellent *Def Jam: Fight For New York* on PS2. Why is it so sludgy? Why are the levels so repetitive? See the full brutal review on page 74. **49**

Blazing Angels

Boring WWII flyer.

What we say now

Decent looking, but boring WWII flight sim with planes so realistic, they're a minor nightmare to fly. The Sixaxis tilt support – so it sort-of feels like flying – is a pleasing, if slightly token, addition, but the targeting's still too fiddly. Set course for page 84 to read the full review. Sadly, it's not the version of PS3 *Pilotwings* we were barely hoping for. **52**

AVOID!

Full auto 2: Battlelines

PSM3 Issue 84 | 36%

What we say now

Stupid idea, poor game. Cars with guns on them? What is this? 1994? The handling is infuriating, there's no sensation of speed and the *Destruction Derby*-style arena bits are dull. It doesn't even feel like you're driving. **36**

Sonic the Hedgehog

PSM3 Issue 86 | 47%

What we say now

Oh Sonic, what's happened? For every moment of classic platforming there's a million examples of bad design and a shoddy game engine rife with bugs. Full review on page 72. **47**

F1 Championship Edition

PSM3 Issue 85 | 48%

What we say now

Unfortunately, joyless handling means the prospect of 22-car (with 11 human player) online races – or using your PSP as a rear-view mirror – do little to save an average game. **50**

Gundam: Target In Sight

PSM3 Issue 84 | 28%

What we say now

Nothing's changed. Two months after we lamented the Japanese version, this is still one of the rustiest games on PS3. It wouldn't look out of place on PS2 or at a push, the PSP. Not even the lower price tag can justify wasting your cash on this. **28**

Fight Night Round 3

Just holding on in the third round

What we said then

"Fundamentally no different to the PS2 game, though still worth playing if you're new to *Round 3*. However, it does clear any doubts about PS3's graphical power and contains the best sweat physics ever. You're better off waiting for this champion to come out in Britain before climbing into the ring again."

PSM3 Issue 83 | 78%

What we say now

It looks pur-dy, but after a few heated lunch-time battles, the appeal's waned. Still, a looker and one of PS3's best multi-player games.

78

Keeping uppercut with the Joneses Roy Jones Jnr looks as incredible in-game as he does here. Nice.

Virtua Tennis 3

Smashes the opposition

What we said then

"No giant leap for the series, but enough improvements to be a must-buy for *Virtua Tennis* fans. This will make you love tennis. It's so realistic that it forces you to appreciate the sport's intricacies – a stealthy education dressed as game addiction. Our biggest complaint is that there's no online play."

PSM3 Issue 85 | 85%

What we say now

We're still playing this now, with regular lunchtime four-player matches. We're also continuing our career (with the tennis-mad Bjorn Slazenger, see page 114 of PSM3#85) and chasing the elusive No.1 spot. The more we play, the more intricacies we notice and master.

85

The Juan and only Mr Carlos Ferrero here has a strong forehand, but his backhand is weak like kittens.

NBA 2K7

PSM3 Issue N/A | N/A

What we say now

Our review copy arrived as we were going to press, but from what we've played it looks nice and plays a solid game. We'll reserve our full-court judgement until next issue, so check back next month for the complete lowdown. For the record, the game averaged about 80% in US reviews which is respectable.

NHL 2K7

PSM3 Issue N/A | N/A%

What we say now

As above, except we've not had a chance to give this a quick play through. If past NHL 2K games are anything to go by, then this should be one to look out for. It's got the market to itself until EA decide to launch their next NHL game. Full review next month.

World Snooker Champ' 2007

PSM3 Issue 83 | 79%

What we say now

A few weeks after our review, we're not so snooker loopy. In fact, we've not played it since – not because it's a bad game, but we've just had more exciting things to do. Like watching Ugly Betty and, er, washing. N'that.

75

Tiger Woods 07

PSM3 Issue 84 | 82%

What we say now

Still the best console golf game, but trapped in the bunker of its own success. Save better animation and courses, it's familar fare(way).

81

Network Games

Download these gems for £1.99 to £6.99 (or free) from the PS Store

Tekken: Dark Resurrection

From: Namco

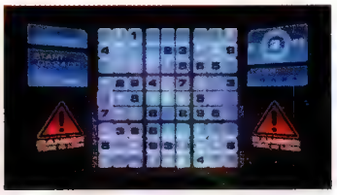
A real treat, it's the recent PSP game, boasting over 30 characters including two debutants Dragunov and Lili, plus Jinpachi Mishima the previously unplayable boss, all yours for a tenner and a simple download. It's a superb fighting game, much more accessible and immediately satisfying than Virtua Fighter 5, and one of the few PS3 games in 'True' HD 1080p. Bargain.

Tekken for granted A new episode was inevitable but we never expected the PSP version to come to PS3.

Lemmings 2

From: Team 17

Despite their suicidal tendencies, the Lemmings have endured over fifteen years of puzzling. The premise remains the same: lead a troop of lemmings safely through a trap-riddled level by assigning them different roles such as climber, blocker, digger etc, the difference being that now that there now teleport and cloning machines to increase the difficulty. It's in HD, natch, but... pffft.



Go! Sudoku

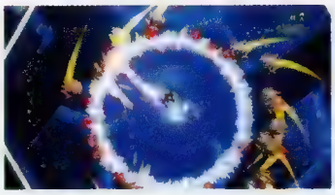
From: Sumo Digital

Again, another game that started out on PSP. Sony's update takes the popular number puzzle you can find in any newspaper and jazzes it up with flashing HD visuals, plus stressful time limits. There are over 1000 different puzzles and a few multiplayer options to add some substance, but there's easier and cheaper ways to get your Sudoku kicks. A bit of a dad-pleaser, all told.

Go! Puzzle

From: Sumo Digital

A collection of puzzle games, the centrepiece of which is a game formerly known as Swizzleblock which applies the golden rule of puzzling: match up the colours and make the blocks disappear. Everything is competently put together and incredibly shiny thanks the HD polish, but this is as essential as Go! Sudoku. That is to say, not very.



Blast Factor

From: Bluepoint Games

An addictive shoot-'em-up that sees a microscopic craft travelling through infected cells blasting viruses. The control system is easy to grasp, with movement of the craft handled by the left analogue stick and firing by the right. Novelty? You can tilt the Sixaxis which sloshes the liquid the action is taking place in, forcing the viruses to one side. Simple, but looks incredible in HD. We like.

Super Rub'a'Dub

From: Sony

Started life as a PS3 graphics demo, and plays like a fusion of Lemmings and Super Monkey Ball... with ducks. Use the Sixaxis to tilt a tray of water and guide a rubber duck around a maze to pick up smaller ducks – while avoiding evil sharks – to deliver them safely to the plug-hole. Initially playable and endearing, but splutters longer term as it lacks any real ingenuity or visual interest. File under: Pleasant distraction.

For duck's sake Will you be able to save these cute little rubber ducks from the evil wind-up sharks?

Gran Turismo HD

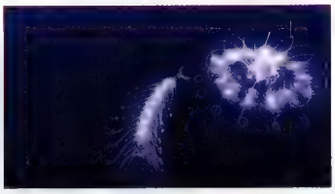
From: Polyphony Digital

For the princely sum of free, you get one track, the stunning Eiger Nordwand, and ten cars, including a gorgeous Ferrari. The diverting new Drift mode lets you screech around bends – made extra compelling by the competitive online ranking system. An essential download.

FlOw

From: Thatgamecompany

Hypnotic aquatic micro-organism game where you guide a life form around via Sixaxis tilt, allowing it to chomp on smaller organisms so it can grow and develop. Power-ups let you eat larger organisms, with six different creatures to develop. Hippy overtones aside, it's rather magical.



PlayStation Store

Movie trailers, demos and free stuff – here's the best of the PS Store.

You'll be able to access the PlayStation Store from Day One of the UK launch once you sign in online (see pg46). Here you'll find the latest blockbuster movie trailers, demos of upcoming PS3 titles and classic PSone titles that you can download and play on your PSP. There's also the promise of new and original games too. Keep tabs on the Games section for download only titles including *flOw*, *Blast Factor* and the strange new title from God of War creator, David Jaffe, *Calling All Cars*. Sadly, you can't play games while things download, but this will change

Calling all cars A download game to look out for.

GT HD Concept An unreleased Day One download...

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PSM3 Reviews

Instant PlayStation justice

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"We can't believe it made it past quality control"

Sonic The Hedgehog page 72

PSM3 review scoring system

0-29 Rubbish
An absolute stinker and an insult to gaming. The makers should be ashamed.

30-49 Poor
Why did they do that? Some simple playtesting could have worked wonders.

50-69 All right
Hey it works, and we can see what they were trying to do. And that's about it.

70-84 Good
Worth playing, especially if you're a fan of the genre. It just lacks that touch of greatness.

85-89 Superb
This is the sweet spot. If a game scores in this zone it's definitely worth your money.

90+ Amazing
You must get this. Failure to do so would mean missing out on a real console classic.

PSM3 BUY IT

The Award
If you see this, then you should buy that game.

The Team | Meet our regular reviews squad

Daniel Dawkins
Specialist in Extreme sports, and deadline stress.
Playing *God Of War 2:* "I am the God of Mags! Stop laughing."

Nathan Irvine
Specialist in Sports games and big fat burgers.
Playing *Virtua Tennis 3:* "To gorge on strawberries and cream."

Andy Kelly
Specialist in Role-players, retro, and My Chemical Romance.
Playing *Final Fantasy 12:* "Are there any emo characters?"

David Cook
Specialist in Shooters, platformers and zoos.
Playing *Burnout Dominator:* "I dominate in this, and in life."

Duncan Harris
Specialist in Relaxing boating holidays and sunhats.
Playing *Virtua Fighter 5:* "Though I prefer boat-based games."

Dave Meikleham
Specialist in Getting people sent off in *Pro Evo 6.*
Playing *Vice City Stories:* "To give my anger a release valve."

Disagree with our reviews? Email your outraged rant to **psm3@futurenet.co.uk**

PS2

Pub SCEE | **Dev** SCEA Santa Monica
Price £40 | **Release** April
Multi-player None

God Of War 2

A sequel that truly is a gift from the gods

KNOW IT NOW

- More lush terrain than the eye can stand? ☑
- More blood than The Shining? ☑
- Plenty of unlockables and bonuses? ☑
- A story that could win the Booker Prize? ☒

While it seems a bit unfair to smite the newly-crowned God Of War for simply doing his job, as the sequel to Sony's legendary action game gets underway that's what happens. Never one to toe the Olympian line, Kratos has continued helping his native Sparta in its bid to conquer the globe, defying the express wishes of the Gods. As he descends to wreak supernatural havoc on the people of Rhodes it falls to Athena, the architect of his ascendancy, to strip him of the powers he can't help but abuse.

Shrunk back to his natural size and left in the bloodied streets, Kratos can only watch as the city's towering Colossus statue is brought to life. There's a chorus of grinding metal as it wrenches free of its lifelong pose, eyes lit with divine electricity and feet tearing themselves from a crumbling pedestal. And it's here, before you've even tapped out your first combo, that you realise *God Of War* has lost absolutely none of its power.

Fly hard How to play chicken with a horse. Even these brief interludes mix enemy types and bosses, so dodge manoeuvres come in mighty handy.

The flying horseman

Air travel, Greek style

They're not quite as brilliant as the rest of the game, but the Pegasus sky battles don't feel remotely out of place. They occur when Kratos travels from one place to the other. You can still fend off airborne foes with light and heavy attacks, occasionally finishing them off with a QTE button tap sequence to send them plummeting Earthwards – neigh problem. (cough)

ON THE DISC

God Of War 2

"This sequel is universally more ambitious than its predecessor"

"You realise God Of War has lost absolutely none of its power"

Titan your belts Not just a treadmill with neither beginning nor end, the largest Pegasus level takes you deep inside a Titan's lair.

Greek mythology

Titan quest

Another excuse for murder on a mythic scale

Much of *GOW2*'s story concerns the war between the Titans and the Olympian Gods, focusing on the fabled Sword Of Olympus which Kratos charges with his own power as the game gets going. Stolen by Zeus and driven through Kratos's body, retrieving it becomes the object of this second quest, the Earth goddess Gaia charging the hero with its recovery and saving him from death. Only by reaching the Sisters of Fate can he hope to win it back.

Air Kratos A row with Icarus ends with Kratos snatching his wings and casting him to a bottomless abyss. Don't get sympathetic – your gain is worth his pain.

Murder spree Goons' souls help build weapon power.

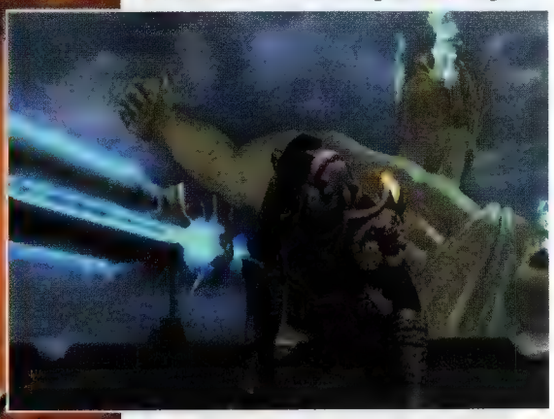
Bringing cut-scenes, minigames and complex hack-and-slashing together into a seamless clash, this opening level is what David Jaffe's series first became famous for: a good old fashioned rollercoaster ride, with all its rails and clockwork props, writ large by the power of PlayStation. *God Of War 2* is universally more ambitious than its predecessor, linking together enough plot devices to justify – almost – the who's who of monsters and legends that satisfies its hero's blades. Just a minute of Kratos's journey to the distant Temple of Fates, where heroes such as Perseus and Jason hope to rewrite history for their own gain, is worth dozens of your average set-pieces – polished beyond anything currently on PS3.

Business as usual

The *Devil May Cry* nazis will tell you it's a bogus thrill, of course, and that *GOW* is a game in which the simplest inputs – a triple tap of a single button, for example – produce a greater output than they deserve. And it's true to a degree. Though it's back to square one for Kratos's move set and equipment list, there's rarely a time when his attacks don't light up the screen and spill the blood of everyone within 30 feet. Again, combat is all about chaining attacks and dodges, countering/flanking manoeuvres and watching the kill count fly. But it's not without technique – there's much to be learned about which moves can be interrupted for the sake of a dodge, and where chances lie within each opponent's attack patterns. But you only have to reach a certain level of proficiency or max out the power of Kratos's blades to make a routine out of bombarding enemies with magic and combos, parrying the occasional blow.

One thing Sony clearly didn't want in this game was downtime. There are no overlong runs between points A and B, no cut-scenes without the odd interaction to spice things up, and no chance to take a breather and plan your attack. This, once again, is all about the rush – the berserk charge through armour and flesh, and cavernous traps that open suddenly into the most extraordinary outdoor scenes. Almost half the game seems to occur midway between the Earth and Heaven, where the sun breaks over coloured clouds and vast kingdoms hang in the sky, waiting,

Blade stunner Heavier weapons become available as you kill key bosses, but max out their power and the Blades Of Chaos are second only to the Blade Of Olympus.



What happens next? Kratos throws a tantrum at the gods as the Colossus falls. Watch that giant hand, though.

Hit maker A crowded, confined space is the ideal recipe for a spiralling hit count. 100 plus? Bread and butter.

of course, for you to clamber up their walls and kick in their luxuriously textured doors.

Action game

A few new actions have crept into Kratos's repertoire, such as overhead monkey climbs and grapple swings that orbit around rather than beneath their anchors. Almost all the mythical figures he encounters meet an astonishingly violent end, adding a legendary artefact to his inventory – Perseus's shield, for example, or Icarus's wings – that alters his basic skills. By and large, though, the game plays by familiar rules. Where there's a door that won't budge there's a lever or key, where there's a pressure plate there's a statue, where there's a glint of light there's an object to be manipulated. And when a bird-footed pygmy jumps out and blows his trumpet, you know he's calling out a cyclops to stomp all over you.

Worse than death

Fail too many times and the game will ask you if you'd like to change your difficulty setting to something less hardcore – the cheeky so-and-so

At times it feels like flicking through an oft-read book – the journey again full of button-tap doors, sliding furniture, QTE finishing moves and interactive cinematics. But no matter. *GoW2* knows exactly how much freedom it wants to give, how repetitive to be, and how best to reward you for tagging along (finish the game *and* the seven-stage Challenge Of The Gods – with a Titan rating – by the way, and you'll unlock Arena mode, allowing you to place any of *GoW2*'s monsters in one place and kick them in). Its production values are sky-high – some, like the mountains, are so beautiful you'll want to weep – and its orchestral score second-to-none.

For proof that this hobby isn't just about the technology – the Cell chips and the HD era – but when you sit down, pick up the pad and *connect* with a game, look no further. Defiantly mainstream, singularly brutal and yet captivating throughout, *GOW2* is up there with the very best action games around. Get it. **Duncan Harris**

Fave Feature

PSM3 Verdict

***God Of War 2* contains...**

Buckets of blood | The return of the Challenge Of The Gods | Huge bosses

Overall Like running eyes-first into a wall of beauty, *GOW2* is yet another of PS2's last minute masterpieces.

93

PS2

Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Price £40 | **Release** March 23
Multi-player 1-7

ON THE DISC
We'll have this on the disc for you next time

Sleeve it out Check out the Champions League badges on the players' arms. The level of detail is excellent.

UEFA Champions League 2006-2007

A token update of *FIFA '07* with robotic AI. So why are we sort-of excited?

KNOW IT NOW

The standard parade of kits and emblems? ☑
The Champs League music from ITV? ☑
Still slightly worse than *Pro Evo*? ☑
Really, really different to *FIFA 07*? ☒

Oooh, we like that. Having just loaded up *UEFA* for the first time, we're greeted by the stirring operatic Champions League theme so familiar from Wednesday night ITV. God bless the *FIFA* series and it's license-happy handlers – this is powerful stuff. Electric memories of pre-match excitement are stirred, atmosphere heavy and anticipation high. We suddenly fancy a bottle of Amstel.

In reality, of course, we know that our excitement has everything to do with the might and majesty of the Champions League itself and very little to do with EA's hardly-anticipated update of the barely six months-old *FIFA 07*. But still, our initial shivers make us think that another game trading on the thrills and spills of the Champions League might not be such a bad idea after all, especially if it were to come packaged with some innovative new features and gameplay improvements.

Which, predictably, is the major sticking point – it doesn't come with *any* gameplay improvements, significant or otherwise. Very little has changed since *FIFA*'s last runout, with the overall feel still stiff and a little robotic. Knocking the ball about feels sluggish and leaden – there's never any zip on the passes or urgency to the play. Worse still the shooting – which was coming together in *07* – again seems highly automated. The power and direction of your attempts on goal have little to do with whatever buttons you press – the ball just takes off. It's miles away from the nuanced control offered by *Pro Evo*.

Intelligent football?

The only obvious addition is the 'quick controls' option. We've been suspicious for a while that every update of *FIFA* is contractually obliged to nick something from *Pro Evo*, but this is shameless. A tap of L1 before any restart enables you to take the set-piece quickly, exactly – *exactly* – like *Pro Evo 6*'s quick free-kick option.

To make matters worse *UEFA*'s AI is a bit of a shambles. Even on the higher difficulty levels it's always very obvious you're playing a machine, from the way the attitude of opposing teams will shift disjointedly (at 3-0 down their game is raised unrecognisably and they wheel out the step-overs and sidesteps) to some bizarre and inhuman stop-start on-field movement. To illustrate the latter, at one point we stood completely still at the edge of the opposition box with the ball at our feet. Three defenders jerkily crept towards us, circling our player like he was protected

Firing blanks It never really feels like you're completely in control of the shooting at any time.

UEFA 2007

"Simply *FIFA 07* repackaged with minor tweaks"

The big night Charged matches at the San Siro are what the Champions League is all about.

It's tricky The best players can pull off some amazing skills. Don't bother trying them with Celtic, mind

The stand-off The AI defenders are ridiculously timid and their tactics tend towards foolishness.

by an invisible force field and refusing to put a challenge in. "He's not really doing much with it here," Clive Tyldesley chirped on the commentary – more alarmingly, though, neither were the opposition.

Mode for it

As for different game modes, straightforward exhibition matches and the managerial Season offering return, but the real attraction is obviously the showcase of the Champions League itself. In practice this plays out pretty much like any other cup competition in any other version of *FIFA*, but it does bring along with it the Ultimate Challenge mode. This is a celebration of the greatest moments in Champions League history, in which you can replay the competition's most memorable comebacks, the best (and hardest to complete) of which is Manchester United's last-gasp final victory over Bayern Munich in 1999. More focused than a standard 90-minute game and adding a welcome bit of drama to a non-narrative game, the Challenge mode is the highlight of *UEFA*, although even this is slightly tarnished by the fact that EA haven't included the correct squads for the teams of the time – you have to play the challenges with the current-day line-ups, which obviously differ in strength from their predecessors.

Need, got, got, need *UEFA* includes a victory sticker album. To finish it, you'll need to beat every team in the game – and no sending away to get the last ones in the post.

It's an excellent idea spoilt by a lazy oversight – pretty much like *UEFA* as a whole, then. The Champions League is a amazing showcase of the drama and passion of the beautiful game, but EA have botched its transition to PS2 by simply repackaging *FIFA 07* with minor tweaks and insubstantial additions. Quite simply, a wasted opportunity. **Nathan Ditum**

Fave Feature

"Hearing the intro music sends shivers down our spines"

PSM3 Verdict

***UEFA Champion's League 2007* contains...**

No online play | In-depth Managerial mode

A victory sticker album to fill up

Overall Unless you're crazy about the Champions League, *UEFA* simply doesn't offer anything over *FIFA 07*.

67

PS2

Pub Rockstar | **Dev** Rockstar Leeds
Price £20 | **Release** Out Now
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
See more of *GTA: VCS* on next month's disc
PSP/Reviews

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories

VCS comes, inevitably, to PS2 – but *GTA*'s starting to look awfully creaky...

KNOW IT NOW

Better than the PSP version? ☑
A cameo by diamond geezer Phil Collins? ☑
A cameo by scary, scary Gary Busey? ☑
Better than being Tony Montana? ☒

When *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories* was released back in October, it automatically became one of PSP's best games. Rockstar Leeds had somehow managed to cram in all the charm and gleeful excess of the original *Vice City* into something the size of a Jammy Dodger. But being one of the best games on PSP is akin to being champions of the Scottish third division, begging the question – can Victor Vance's exploits survive in a PS2 market choked with the likes of *Scarface* and *Just Cause*?

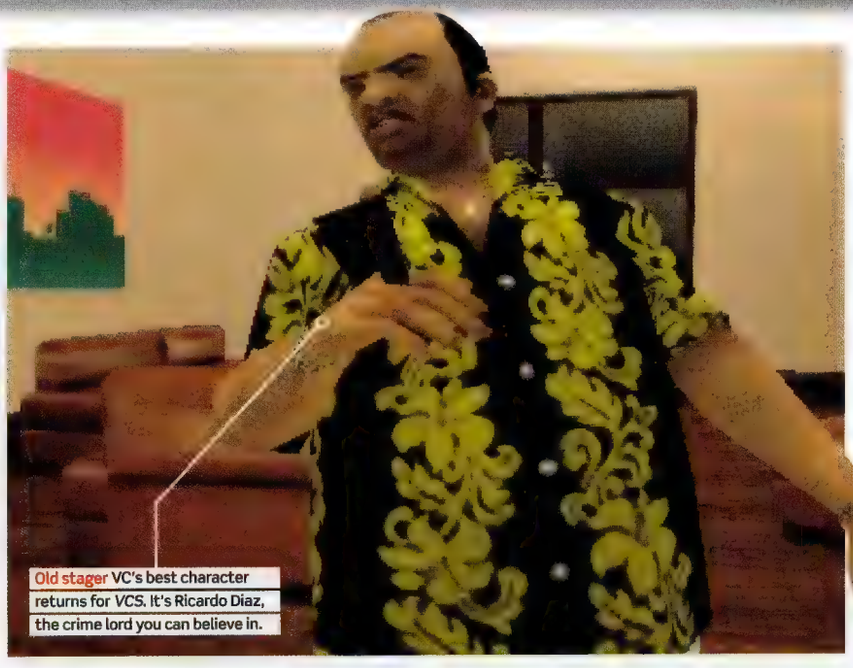
Well, that all depends on your expectations. Those expecting something radically different from the PSP version or indeed the original *Vice City* are likely to be disappointed. If, on the other hand, you look at *VCS* for what it really is – a 20 quid port of a thoroughly decent action game – then you'll do just fine. And the advantages of shifting the game to PS2 are immediately apparent. Smooth camera control, an improved frame-rate and the ability to perform a drive-by without developing crippling arthritis are all welcome additions that help improve the *VCS* experience.

Vice and easy

What was once a stunning technical achievement on Sony's handheld is now a good-looking PS2 title, and Rockstar have used their experiences on *San Andreas* and *Canis Canem Edit* to iron out many of the graphical flaws from the Tommy Vercetti days. *Vice City* now looks far more solid and vibrant than it once did, with much improved lighting effects and a greater draw distance helping to create a vivid picture of '80s sleaze and decadence.

The driving model for *GTA*'s vehicles is still a Miami mile in front of the competition, with the PS2 pad feeling more responsive and satisfyingly weighty than the PSP controls. It also helps that the game feels like less of a watered-down PSP port than *Liberty City Stories*, with a

Miami nice There's no better way to admire *VC*'s improved draw distance than in a copter cockpit.



Old stager VC's best character returns for *VCS*. It's Ricardo Diaz, the crime lord you can believe in.

complement of vehicles closer to *San Andreas*' selection. Cars, copters, bikes and BMXs all litter the streets of this sun-drenched metropolis, with Rockstar even managing to squeeze in a variety of hovercrafts and jet-skis to navigate the city's shimmering waters.

Unfortunately, not all of the game's features have translated over so well from the handheld realm. The general structure and length of many missions feel poorly implemented for PS2, and this creates a problem with pacing throughout the game. For example, the beginning of Victor's adventure is decidedly low-key and the first few hours in Vice City are a real slog, with overly simple collection and escort missions that have clearly been designed for short handheld bursts. Things do eventually pick up, both in challenge and complexity, but never threaten to reach the giddy heights of *San Andreas*.

Sink or swim

While some of the new features that Rockstar have added since your last trip to Vice City are welcome – the pick being a enjoyable business development system, as in *San Andreas* – others feel undercooked, such as Victor's inability to clamber back to shore from all but the flattest slopes around the city. This was a forgivable restraint in catering for a handheld, but it's a problem that really should have been fixed for the full-fat version.

So back to that question. Can *VCS* survive against the likes of *Scarface* and the other pretenders to *GTA*'s throne? Well... yes and no. *GTA*'s winning combination of quality arcade driving, coupled with its established tongue-in-cheek humour and scathing satire, really help keep it ahead of the competition in some ways. But in others it's plain to see that you're playing with a six-year-old game engine. Shooting and targeting feel more archaic than ever and just aren't as involving as running around pretending to be Tony Montana, shooting people in the shins and taunting them with inventive Cuban obscenities.

On your bike There's nothing quite like tearing through the streets of Vice City while listening to Spandau Ballet.

Babe watch *Scarface* let you insult/come onto ladies gratuitously. It's hard not to miss that in *VCS*.

Business, man
Scaling the corporate ladder is a little daunting at first, but persist and your budding businesses will make you money hand over fist.

The *GTA* template is beginning to feel a little stretched these days and, with games like Xbox 360's *Crackdown* bringing new toys to the sandbox, it's clear that Rockstar need some fresh ideas to bolster their much-loved series. For 20 notes, though, you can't really complain. Played the PSP version to death? Leave this on the shop shelf. But if you're looking for a sunny spot to fritter away the hours until you get a PS3, then *GTA* is still the only vacation we'd recommend. **Dave Meikleham**

Fave Feature

PSM3 Verdict

***Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories* contains...**
Better graphics | Improved controls
Gyrocopters | An advert for children's pants

Overall A welcome trip back to Vice City, but *GTA* is in need of a revamp if it wants to truly shine on PS3.

83

PS2

Pub Sony | **Dev** Zipper Interactive
Price £30 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-32 (online)

ON THE DISC
See this on the disc next time out
PS2/Reviews

Basement Jack Clearing out buildings is brilliant when the breach command works – and deeply annoying when it doesn't.

SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs Combined Assault

Get by with no help whatsoever from your friends

While making *Combined Assault*, developers Zipper decided to focus on offline play, a bold move for a franchise built on a reputation as one of the finest online shooters. OK, there are ten new maps and four-way co-op multi-player, but Zipper don't just want you to buy this because it's the best online shooter for PS2. They want you to buy it because it's the best *offline* shooter as well. Unfortunately, it isn't.

In *Combined Assault* you'll play through a single-campaign set in the fictional country of Adjikistan. But despite being concentrated within just one nation, there is a fair variety to the levels. You might decide to blow up a tanker and secure the docks in the morning sun, knock out a helicopter base at around lunch and escort a convoy past hostile roadblocks in the afternoon – before heading to the snowy mountains to take out enemy cave systems that night. (Although it has to be said, *SOCOM* looks and plays better outdoors than it does in some of the dreary and repetitive indoor sections.)

Tool Up Pick your own strategy for each mission by equipping your men with your choice of weapons.

Dumb and dumber

But the bottom line is that a squad shooter is really only as good as its AI. And much like its predecessors, *SOCOM* is crippled by your team-mates' inconsistency and idiocy. Sometimes they'll completely ignore your orders. Path-finding is clearly an issue so you'll often find someone repeatedly walking into a wall instead of providing covering fire. We watched in horror once as a man walked off a roof, like a lemming to his death. And if your mates avoid that, they'll often take peculiar routes that leave them pointlessly exposed to enemy fire.

Wide open space
The outdoor maps are the best. Picking your own route to take out objectives makes you feel badass.

Since the AI is so unreliable, *SOCOM* isn't designed to rely on tactics. You're encouraged to lead from the front, setting your team to the 'follow' and 'fire at will' commands. This makes it easier to play the game, though, of course, it results in less rewarding thrills than if you were to play properly. Except you can't. Phew.

So far, so *SOCOM*. Online there's not enough new here. Offline, what's done well is done better elsewhere – any of the *Conflict* games, for instance – and what's done badly isn't worth discovering. Let's hope Zipper can realise *SOCOM*'s offline potential on PlayStation 3. **Pete Webber**

PSM3 Verdict

***SOCOM: Combined Assault* contains...**
Infuriating squad AI | A decent variety of missions | Not enough new online content.

Overall Crap squadmate AI and a lack of advancement online. Got any other *SOCOM*s? Then don't bother.

69

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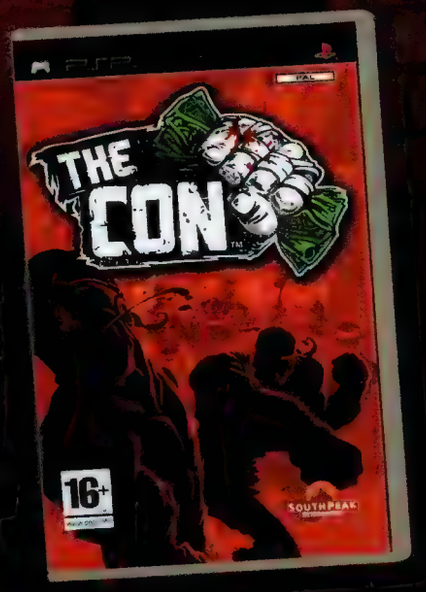

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GAME
game.co.uk

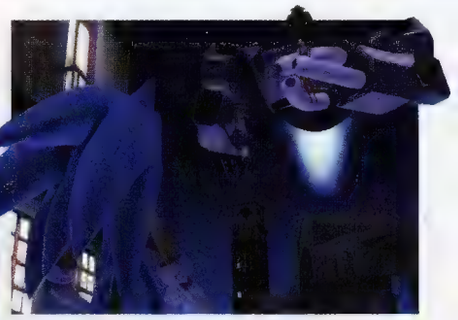
SOUTHPEAK GAMES
www.southpeakgames.com

Pub Sega | **Dev** Sonic Team
Price £40 | **Release** March 23
Multi-player No

ON THE DISC
See Sonic on the disc right now

Sonic The Hedgehog

The painful erosion of Sonic's legacy continues...



Any potential Sonic The Hedgehog had of returning to form has been destroyed by the fact that his PS3 debut is a broken mess. Honestly, for a supposedly 'finished' game it can be an embarrassing joke at times and we can scarcely believe it made it past Sega's game testers – or *anyone* at Sega for that matter. There are so many glitches that the game becomes defined by them, and the few good ideas it has get lost among fractured polygons and rotten collision detection. The sad thing is, if it weren't for its numerous technical discrepancies, it'd be a pretty good game.

The game revolves around an RPG-style hub, the seaside town of Soleanna. It's a weird, blocky, characterless place full of poorly-rendered humans who you have to chat with to proceed to the next level. These bits feel like a careless afterthought and they're an enormous pain because you have to go through them every single time you run out of lives in the regular levels. Tasks include rescuing a little girl trapped on a roof, finding the captain of the guards and defending a gate from Eggman's marauding robots. It's pretty yawnsome.

Old-school

But get past the lame 'RPG' stuff and you can get involved with some classically Sonic-esque levels full of corkscrews and jump pads and all the stuff that made his 2D adventures great. Only... they aren't very good at all. Again, because of those glitches we mentioned earlier. There are some bits that are undeniably exciting, including a death-defying ride through a post-apocalyptic city on the back of a tiny bit of metal, but for every shriek of joy there are a thousand grunts of annoyance and filthy swears.

Things get better when you find yourself controlling Silver the Hedgehog. He has *Second Sight*-style telekinetic powers, so you can pick things up and toss them about, which is actually quite entertaining. Other playable characters include Tails (who can fly, as ever), Amy (good at jumping) and Knuckles (good at punching). In fact, the whole cast of the Sonic universe is in there, with Blaze and Rouge both making regular appearances. But the three main characters (each of whom have different episodes) are Sonic, Silver and – you guessed it – Shadow. Bleurgh.

Princess superstar **Princess Elise is the girl Sonic's trying to save from Eggman. In the ending he actually *kisses her*. Isn't bestiality illegal?**

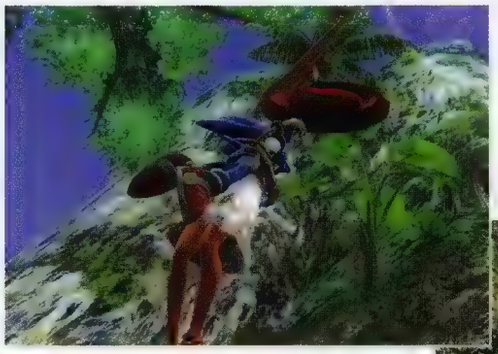
But when you sit back and look at it from afar, you realize that despite your blinkered love for the speedy blue hog and his pals, and the lovely graphics, it's actually just a poor game rammed with flaws. It is worth a rent, however, just to savour the few good bits, laugh at all the glitches... and to start crying when you remember what Sonic games used to be like in the '90s. Sob. **Andy Kelly**

PSM3 Verdict

***Sonic the Hedgehog* contains...**
Lame RPG bits | Telekinetic powers | Scary realistic Robotnik | Sonic *kissing girls*

Overall Could have been decent with tighter controls and fewer glitches. It's not, though.

47



Daddy long legs Sega lengthened Sonic's limbs so he wouldn't look out of proportion to the humans. Madness.

Blue blooded You'll be carrying the princess all over the place to protect her from danger. Yawn.

"I've tried loads of spot treatments. Now I've found **Free**derm."

Tear here and take to your pharmacist

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Pub EA Chicago | **Dev** EA
Price £50 | **Release** March 23
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
Watch *Def Jam Icon* on the disc now
PS3/Coming Soon

Def Jam Icon

Def Jam, check yourself before you wreck... too late

KNOW IT NOW

- Start up your own record label? ☑
- Environments that attack you? ☑
- Brand new Career mode? ☑
- Superb next-gen gameplay? ☒

Summer 2006. We're at Electronic Arts' headquarters in San Francisco for their annual Gamer's Day. Sat in a room the size of a cinema, Kudo Tsunoda – the top man at EA Chicago – leaps on stage to announce that "the sequel to *Def Jam: Fight For New York* will be on PS3" and that "it will re-define the beat-em-up genre". As mad as it sounds, given the OTT, comic-book-style, visceral thrills of *Def Jam: Fight For New York* on PS2 (which scored 86% in PSM54), we were inclined to believe him. All they needed to do was add next-gen gloss, a tighter Story mode and a fresh crop of hip-hop stars to make *Def Jam* on PS3 one of the greatest beat-em-ups in history. Fast forward to 2007 – and neither Kudo, or us, have ever been so completely, *utterly*, wrong.

Right load of rap

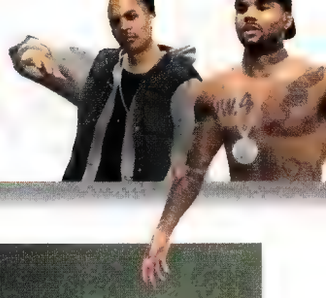
Def Jam Icon – as it's now known – is a mess that sullies all the good work of EA's first two scrappers. Seriously, it's like having Vanilla Ice headlining above Dr Dre and Jay-Z. For some reason EA Chicago have ripped the best bits from the series and replaced them with the 'genre-defining' guff that Kudo exclusively told us about in PSM79. Just to recap, the 'guff' we're referring to is the environment acting as a 'third character' in a fight, and the tacked-on hip-hop mogul 'career' plot – more later. To reach this next generation plateau, EA have ditched all the big name rap stars like Snoop and Ice T, the stylish cartoon visuals and the super-solid fighting mechanics. What we're left with is a shoddy attempt at fusing a lifestyle simulator with a fighter. That's played almost entirely in about three colours thanks to a mental stylistic decision.

So what's happened? Well, the fighting mechanics have been needlessly overhauled, meaning that not only is it worse than *Fight For New York*, it also feels sludgy and broken. There's little

No T.I-dea We're know the bloke in the vest is the legendary Sticky Fingaz, but we've never heard of T.I. until this game came out. He's got a lovely jacket, mind.

Def Jam: Icon

"A shoddy attempt at fusing a lifestyle sim with a fighter"

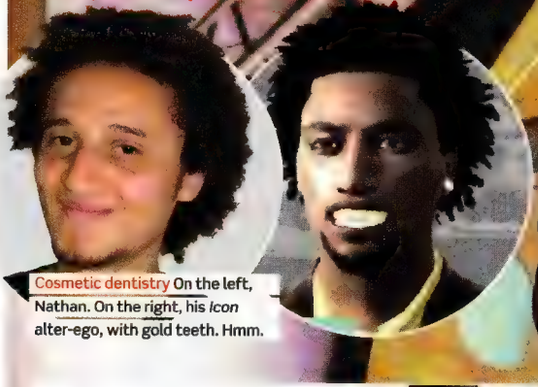


"*Icon* feels sludgy and broken"

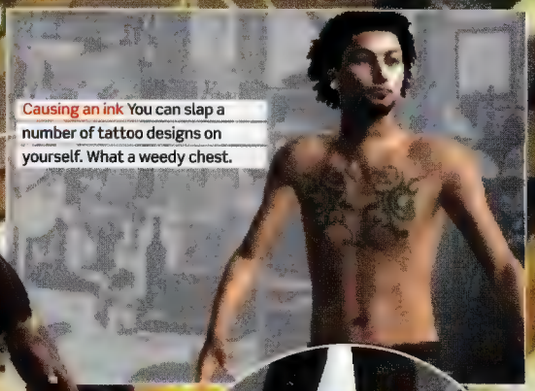
Career mode

Anatomy of a hip-hop mogul

Live your rap star fantasies.



Cosmetic dentistry On the left, Nathan. On the right, his *Icon* alter-ego, with gold teeth. Hmm.

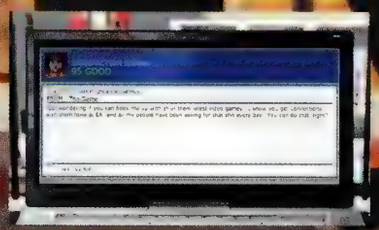


Causing an ink You can slap a number of tattoo designs on yourself. What a weedy chest.

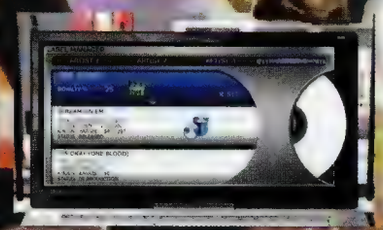
Ring the noise Bling up your digits and ram home imprints of rings into your rivals' skulls. Nice.

Caught short Mix up your look as much as you like. See our stylish shoe and short combo? We wear that for real.

A shoe-in Stomping on a foe's face? You'll need nice shoes. Pick pink ones to humilate people.



Sin box As a hip-hop boss, keep your acts happy. You mainly do this by hitting folk they don't like.



Songs of praise You can set how much royalty money your acts get from their latest hits.

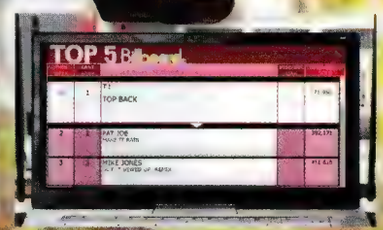
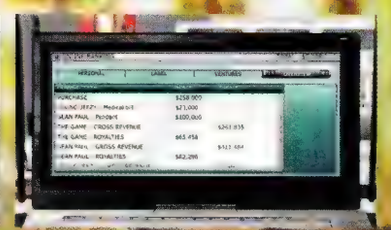


Chart of war Once there's a song out, you can track its progress in the charts on this screen.



Money for nothing Checking your bank balance shows how much crap you've been buying.

or no difference between say, Lil' Jon or Sean Paul, when it comes to fighting styles. They both have the same move set (save for some subtle animations), so there's no other reason than personal preference to choose one fighter from another. It barely matters anyway, because all bets are off as soon as you step into the fight zone. All that stuff about the environment becoming a third character *is* true, in the sense that the arenas attack you via hazards littered about the place.

As the background bass line drops in, lighting frames swing from the ceilings, petrol pumps explode and giant speaker stacks burst in time with the music – and if you're in the way, you're stuffed. You can control these objects by holding △ and spinning the right stick. This sounds – and looks – like your fella is scratching the backing track. He mimics hand movements and, at the climax, the bass bursts and activates the environmental hazards, so – in theory – you can cause serious damage to your foe with a well-timed effort.

Grapple crumble

Sadly, the fighting system destroys any chance of this working. It feels really woolly. Trying to pick off your opponent with strikes and grappling – performed by flicking the right stick up – is frustrating, as your opponent is nearly always just out of range to get a grip. Still, eventually you will get hold of someone and then your options are limitless. If, by limitless, you mean 'three'. You can a) trip them over, b) slap them with all the force of a damp sock or c) chuck them into a hotspot and pray it'll explode in time. The latter is favoured by AI characters, who do it over and over again. Fights are spent simply bouncing between these hotspots rather than doling out savage beatings. You can't even grapple people when they're on the floor. Argh.

Def Jam: Icon

"Rushed and over-ambitious. A disappointing effort"

Show stopper One of the venues for scuffling is the Def Jam studio itself. It's packed with loads of hazards to chuck your opponent into.

K.O. Kano The token British bloke is Kano. As a kid, he played for Chelsea. Their loss. Maybe.

So with the fighting system crippled, this new hip-hop lifestyle career thing needs to be the saving grace. But you guessed it, it isn't. It feels like an afterthought rather than a genius addition. We played said Story mode for hours in the hope that something new and exciting would happen, but it never did. The highlight in all that time was watching our plush crib go up in flames as we sent Lil' Jon through our plate-glass fireplace. And that's it. We dressed up our chap in new threads, signed new acts – via the intriguing negotiation technique of smashing someone's face in – and we even had the odd lady round for quick fumble. But while the cut-scenes certainly look pretty enough, the rest feels plain pointless. You have to decide how much money to spend on your artist's marketing – including PR, airplay and merchandise – but, apart from the money you get to spend on new clothes and bling, there's no real reason behind it all. You also get emails from your 'homies' to push the plot along, although the one where The Game asked us to 'sort out the latest and greatest games from the folk at EA' kind of turned our stomach. Talk about shameless self-promotion.

Face it

The editing mode is quality, and you can make near carbon-copies of yourself if you give it the time and patience.

Def Jam Icon was supposed to change the face of fighting games, but the end product feels rushed and over-ambitious. The exploding levels are a barely-veiled, needlessly complicated, rip-off of *Mortal Kombat's* hotspots, while fighting lacks imagination and characters blur into one. We'd have settled for a shinier version of *Def Jam: FFNY* – complete with Blazin' moves (inexplicably taken out here) – instead of this disappointing effort. And we really miss ramming Sean Paul's head through a jukebox. It's one of the biggest disappointments on PS3 and, frankly, we feel conned by this *Icon*. **Nathan Irvine**

Fave Feature

"Rucking in the penthouse while it burns looks cool"

PSM3 Verdict

***Def Jam Icon* contains...**

Hip-hop | Love interests | Wonky fighting
Little soul | A terrific character creator

Overall Like hip-hop at its most indulgent, it's pure style-over-substance – and it barely *works*.

49

Pub VU Games | **Dev** Monolith
Price £40 | **Release** March 23
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
Feel the F.E.A.R. on the disc this month

Total destruction Gunfights are vicious, violent, and beautiful. Rarely do you leave a room, warehouse, or enemy soldier intact. Brutal.

F.E.A.R.

A so-so conversion of the office-based PC shooter. Overtime truly is hell

KNOW IT NOW

Slow motion gunplay and melee attacks?	☑
A girl who makes men explode?	☑
Swearier than Gordon Ramsay?	☑
Makes good use of PS3's power?	☒

F.E.A.R. is hilariously, absurdly violent. It's a shooter set mostly in a single skyscraper block, where genetically modified soldiers and psychic monsters have invaded a biotech firm. And you've got it made, because you're just as modified as the men you face. At any moment, you can slow down time. "Motherfu-u-u-u-u-cker," yell the baddies, as you s-l-o-w-l-y duck behind a pillar, peep out, and take away a soldiers legs with a single blast from the shotgun. "Holy shit, he's flanking us," they scream, as you empty clip after clip into their faces, leaving decapitated corpses spitting blood. Heads are literally rolling. "We got him," they rejoice, as you hit the wrong button *again* and select the now empty sub-machine gun. Uh-oh...

This *should* be brilliant. The mix of ideas are so perfectly balanced: high-action Hollywood gunplay, and a horror plot that's clearly ripped from the Ring. Following you through the building, both tormenting you and leading you on is Alma, a similarly modified little girl wearing a blood red dress. She's the focus of *F.E.A.R.*'s horror interludes. She'll turn the corridor you're in into a blazing inferno, walk on the ceilings and torment you with visions.

Not gun far enough

But it doesn't follow through. The gunfights are by far *F.E.A.R.*'s best element. If they continued uninterrupted for the entire game, you'd have PS3's answer to *Black*. But they're short and fractured. You spend much more time exploring drab offices and cubicles, flicking switches, listening to answer phone messages, or solving yet another jumping puzzle. So much of *F.E.A.R.* is just dead time – minute after minute spent walking through the office block, waiting for the gunfights to kick off.

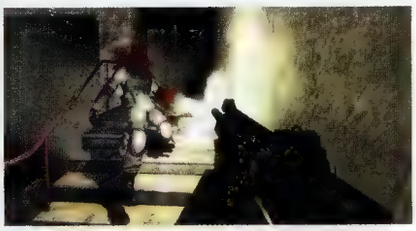
And that's not the only problem. This is a port from a two-year-old PC game. Back then it looked startling, particularly because the gunfights kick up so much dust and smoke. Occasionally, you'll just spray fire into a cloud hoping your bullets will connect – such is the amount of fog kicked up. But it's aged badly. The PS3 version looks like the PC version running on low detail. The textures are grainy, the fogging inept. It's drab, too – the office

F.E.A.R.

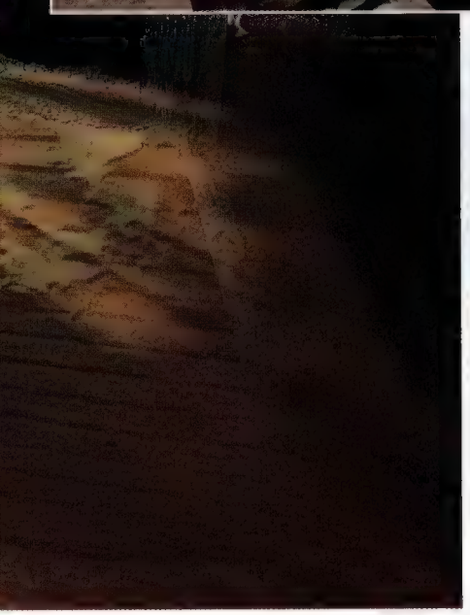
"Two years ago on PC, it looked startling. But it's aged badly"

Quick-brained The AI of enemy soldiers is quite impressive. They'll retreat when threatened and use cover to avoid your fire. Good stuff.

Ninja whinger These robo-ninjas can disappear at will. It's a shame they only appear sparingly through the game.



Feel the F.E.A.R It's rare that you'll fight alongside other F.E.A.R. ops. It's mainly you on your ownsome.



Shoot to kill Armoured soldiers meed two or three blasts to the face to take down. Don't cry. Just shoot.

On a rail **Late in the game you pick up a sniper rail-gun. When you hit a baddie, it sears the flesh from their bones, leaving a gently rocking skeleton. Nasty. But very funny too.**

block setting lending itself to infinite shades of grey but little other colour. And the issues with conversion don't stop there. Despite *F.E.A.R.*'s simple premise, it's actually quite a tough game to control. There are just so many buttons. Buttons to lean left and right. The fire button. A button to switch to the land-mines. A button to swap weapon from a choice of three. A flashlight. A reload. A melee attack. A use button. A throw grenade button. All these functions have been mapped quite awkwardly to the Sixaxis. You can only scroll through your guns, not select them individually. This is not clever: too often you'll be caught switching to an empty gun in the middle of a pitched fire-fight. *F.E.A.R.* maps the fire button to the right hand trigger, and the change-weapon button is on R3. It feels way out of place. For the first couple of hours, expect to constantly hit the 'change weapon' key, instead of fire. The game provides a few alternative configurations, but none are ever comfortable.

Loads of modes

But then, in other ways, this is a good conversion. The online multi-player has survived intact, with Deathmatch and Capture The Flag modes. Online, the slow-motion is triggered by a power-up – when activated the entire game slows to a crawl. And there's also an instant action minigame – dropping you in a level with an infinite number of cloned bad-guys, seeing how long you can last. It's this mode that really shows just how fun *F.E.A.R.* can be: without the shackles of down-time and plot all you're left to do is shoot. It's just sad that it never quite finds the key to those shackles.

Tim Edwards

Fave Feature

PSM3 Verdict

***FEAR* contains...**

Drab graphics | Awesome gunplay
Sickening violence | Naughty words

Overall It's a fair attempt, but in no way essential. Get it if you tire of *Resistance* or *Call Of Duty*.

72

PS2

Pub EA | **Dev** Criterion
Price £40 | **Release** March 23
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
See *Dominator* on the disc right now
PS2/Latest

Car wars There are stacks of different motors again – Hot Rods, muscle cars, you name it – and it'll take ages to unlock them all. You might not bother, however.

Burnout Dominator

Old *Burnout* meets new *Burnout*, but it's a surprisingly uncomfortable drive

KNOW IT NOW

The last ever *Burnout* on PS2? ☑
As eye-meltingly fast as ever? ☑
More old-school than *Burnout Revenge*? ☑
Online play and rankings? ☒

You can split the four *Burnouts* thus far into two categories: the racing ones (the first game and its sequel, *Point Of Impact*) and the crashing ones (*Takedown* and *Revenge*). After *Revenge*, however, some folk muttered about how far the series had strayed from its purist roots, moaning about how 'unrealistic' it was to plough through the back of thirteen trucks and emerge unscathed. Two camps emerged – one preferring knife-edge discipline, the other *fun*. And so now comes *Dominator*, which attempts to combine the straight-edged driving of old with the car-wrecking fizzbomb of the modern *Burnout*.

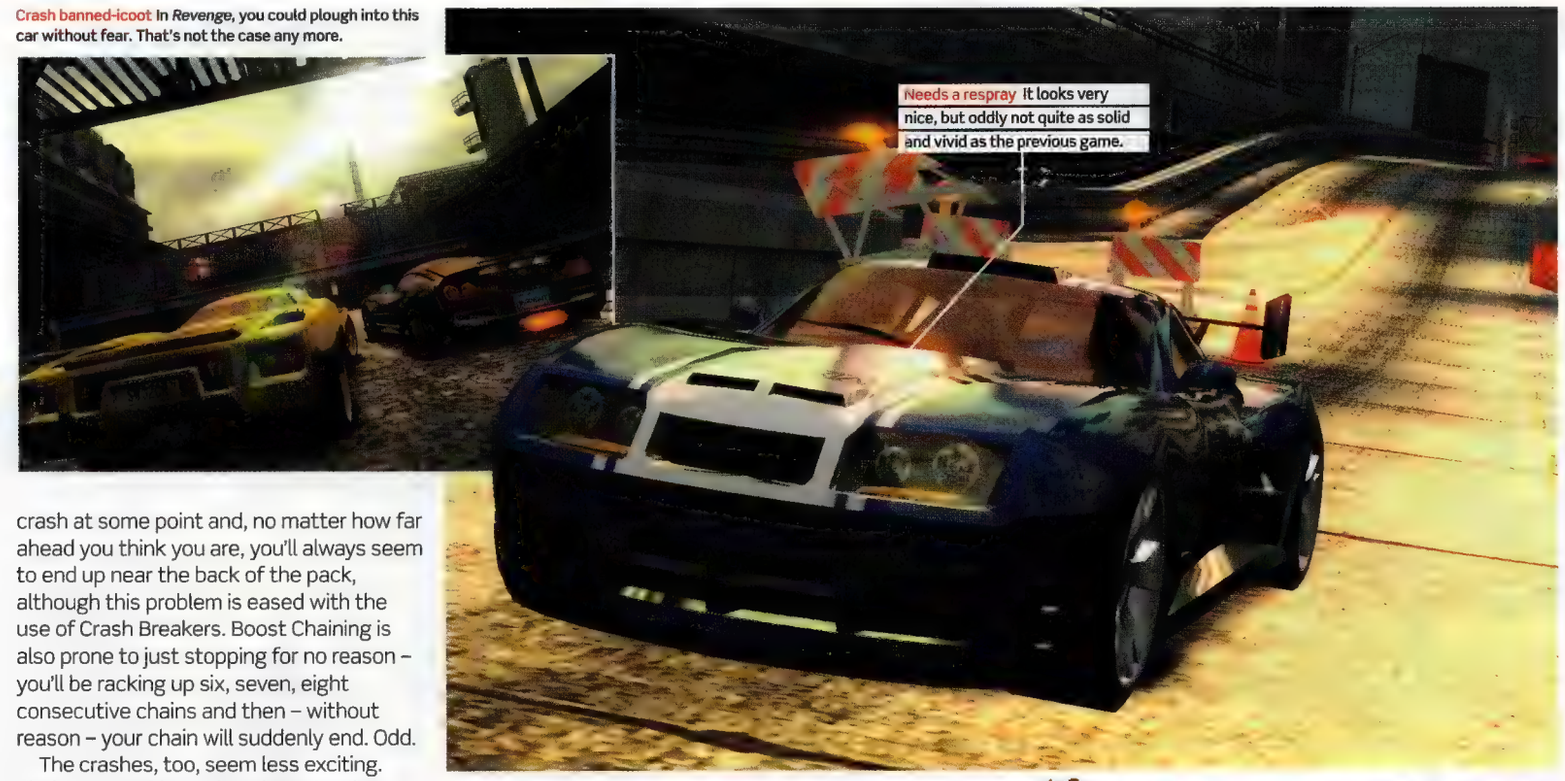
Dominator – named after the Dominator points you acquire by ace driving, used to unlock new tracks – strips everything back. No more smashing into almost anything. No Crash Junctions. No World Tour map. No Crash FM. Less jumps. Instead, it tries to place the emphasis on driving, not carnage. In among normal races and Eliminator contests and suchlike, there are Drift challenges and Maniac mode – which asks you to drive as wildly as you can without actually crashing. *Burnout 2*'s Boost Chaining is back too, allowing you to link together boosts for eyeball-drying insane-o-speeds, but requiring you to drive skilfully without thrusting for quite a while to build up your boost bar. It's all very old-school *Burnout*. Yet Takedowns remain as vital as ever in many of *Dominator*'s events, and Impact Time remains – essential and fun in tracks involving said Takedowns, a bore in those without. It's a curious mix of old and new which doesn't gel easily.

New dog, old tricks

Boost Chaining, for instance, is only really effective on courses where you're asked to build up points via dangerous, high-speed driving. In an actual race, it's less so – given the speeds you're going at, you're bound to

Burnout Dominator

"Exciting, but it feels like Criterion patched it together while working on *Burnout* on PS3"



Crash banned-icoot In *Revenge*, you could plough into this car without fear. That's not the case any more.

crash at some point and, no matter how far ahead you think you are, you'll always seem to end up near the back of the pack, although this problem is eased with the use of Crash Breakers. Boost Chaining is also prone to just stopping for no reason – you'll be racking up six, seven, eight consecutive chains and then – without reason – your chain will suddenly end. Odd.

The crashes, too, seem less exciting. Their comparative rarity when stood next to *Revenge* ought to make them even more thrilling, but you just don't seem to fly through the air as much as before, and they're often little more than apologetic skids along the ground. The camera angles of Impact Time are sometimes wonky too, making it hard to spot your rivals coming up as you ready a Crash Breaker.

Presentation-wise, it's a step back as well. Aside from the menus – much less eye-catching than the maps of *Takedown* and *Revenge* – graphically, it's just not as slick. *Dominator* just isn't as shiny and sharp as *Revenge*. The music, meanwhile – headed by The Fratellis and LCD Soundsystem – is as achingly fashionable as ever. It's like having your ears syringed with the contents of Zane Lowe's mind.

Two into one won't go

Christ, this is all a bit negative, isn't it? The truth is that *Dominator* is damn good – still full of all those impossibly exciting high-speed, all-or-nothing moments that *Burnout* does so well and still capable of getting the heart pumping like few other games can. But it's a bit of a compromise, trying to shoehorn two separate types of racer onto one disc to please everyone, and feels like Criterion patched it together while concentrating on *Burnout* on PS3.

Dominator is, truly, excellent fun and we've concentrated on the negatives because we're so disappointed it's not up to the stellar heights of previous games. But there's no doubt that this is easily the worst *Burnout* yet. Shame. **David Cook**

Call this a party? Only got one DualShock? Party Play mode is a pass-the-pad job in which you take turns to try to get the fastest lap and so on. Totally pointless, then.

Ruling the boost Bump up your boost bar by driving dangerously without actually totalling any cars.

Fave Feature

PSM3 Verdict

***Burnout Dominator* contains**

Less crashing | More careful driving | Trendy indie tunes | A sense of disappointment

Two differing game styles sit uneasily together, like strangers stuck in a lift. Great fun, but the contrast never quite works.

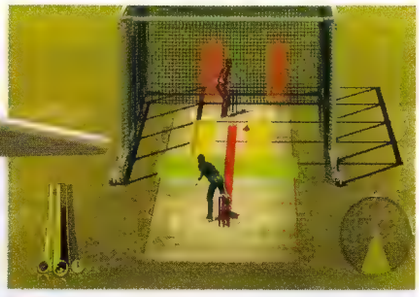
81

PS2

Pub Codemasters | **Dev** Codemasters
Price £30 | **Release** March 23
Multi-player 1-4

ON THE DISC
See *Brian Lara* on the disc right this second
PS2/Latest

Big Bad Brian Like in real life, Lara's game, while occasionally impressive, is starting to age.



Cage rage If at first you don't succeed, head to the nets and practice. Let's hope Duncan Fletcher is reading.

Total kit The 'hip' pyjama kits are in. Thankfully, playing Song 2 every time there's a wicket isn't.

Brian Lara International Cricket 2007

Pick-up-and-play batting, easy to drop fielding...

After England's abysmal tour down under, our chances of winning the World Cup look as likely as Jade Goody releasing a bhangra ragamuffin version of Endless Love with Apache Indians for charity. That said, the moment *Brian Lara* boots up, you're sent to the deliciously detailed sun-drenched wickets of the West Indies and India, your mood is instantly lifted and the painful memory of the Ashes tour dims slightly. Only slightly, mind you.

It isn't all Red Stripes in the sun, though. *Brian Lara 2007* is an accessible but unspectacular cricket sim which feels slightly shallow compared to the more serious *EA Cricket 2007*. Of course, it's far more approachable. From the comprehensive, but never patronising, tutorials to its simpler batting and bowling controls, it breaks down one the world's most deliberately complicated sports into a fun pick-up-and-play game attuned for multi-player. But while its EA counterpart took the bold step of mapping shot play onto the analogue stick, *Brian Lara*'s old-school technique feels less involving, even if it does give you far superior control over the direction of your shots.

Controls
These are useful when playing against a Spin Bowler who pitches the ball short. Play the attacking sweep-shot by pressing the attacking sweep input
Batting
Lesson Sweep-shots
Lesson 4

Clean Sweep If you wouldn't know which end of a cricket bat to hold, the comprehensive tutorials will fill you in.

Bowl queue

Bowling is solid, with good line and length earning special balls to bamboozle your opponent although pitching to the right areas soon becomes routine. But it's fielding that really winds us up. The catching minigame has hit hardcore level, giving you a miniscule window to time a successful bash of the ⊗ button. At least it captures the cat-like reactions required to take wickets at the highest level (and the sheer panic fielders must go through too), we suppose. Returning the ball to the pitch, however, is a constant irritation. Awkwardly tapping L2 or R2 to send the ball back to the wicket or bowler's end might be well-intentioned, but is hideously executed. Nailing it is an unlikely relief, and even if you do pull off a quick throw you'll have to endure the pointless, time-wasting stumping animation, usually when the batsman has been in his crease long enough to wave to his Mum in the crowd and readjust his box.

Sure, Hawkeye's here, bowlers deliveries are powered by Wisden stats, it's got real life ball physics and you can play under the floodlights. But the batting is starting to feel dated and fielding makes you want to impale yourself on a sharpened stump. In these crucial areas, *Brian Lara* needs to raise its game, and fast. **Pete Webber**

Thwack attack ***Lara 2007*** **packs in the licenses, stadia and excellent depictions of the biggest hitters like Freddie.**

PSM3 Verdict

Brian Lara 2007 **contains...**
Solid bowling | Average batting | Terrible fielding | Lacks simulation depth

Overall Limited fun. Much like England, there's plenty of room for improvement. Stick with *EA Cricket*.

68

dbm

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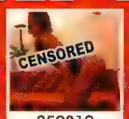

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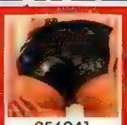
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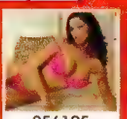
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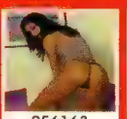
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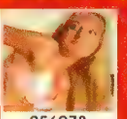
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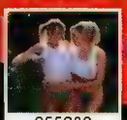
256258 Very Hot Brunette

256232 Lime Bikini Babe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254825 Cheeky Tartan

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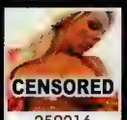
255654 Michelle B

250223 Naughty Blonde



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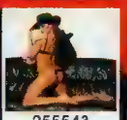
254902 Girls Kissing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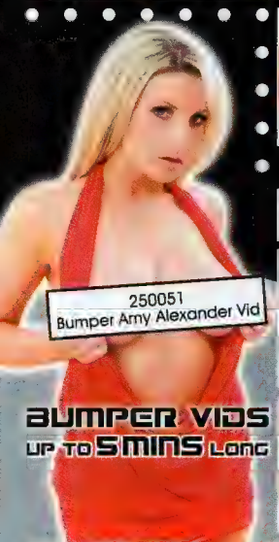
250051 Bumper Army Alexander Vid

250766 Sexy Lucy Zara Video

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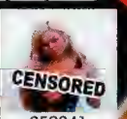
BUMPER VIDS UP TO 5 MINS LONG

250770 Hot Blonde on Bed

250677 Tasty Blonde Babe

250675 Exotic Babe

250679 Filthy Secretary



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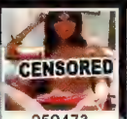
250678 Blonde in Lingerie

250676 Babe in Lounge

250673 Naughty Bird



250473 Dirty Brunette

255658 Michelle B

AMATEUR WIVES VIDS

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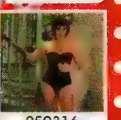
250410 Michelle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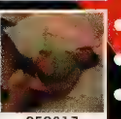
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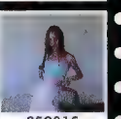
250315 Jenny

REAL GIRL VIDEOS

250407 Claire, Rochdale

250408 Lisa, Luton

250494 Anna, London

250738 Honey, Cardiff

250734 Mia, Belfast

250753 Jenny, Essex

250755 Tracy, Derby

250492 Marie, Dundee

250493 Chloe, Birmingham

250495 Ellie, Sheffield

250736 Nico, Glasgow

250747 Jane, York

250754 Sarah, Devon

250406 Mary, Dublin

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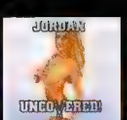
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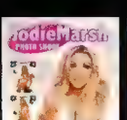
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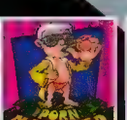
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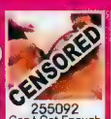
3 STUNNERS 1 LUCKY BLOKE	255230
BOSS TAKES HER FOR OVERTIME	255522
REAL NASTY ACTION	255523
HOW MANY FINGERS?	256000
HORNY MILF	256083
FORBIDDEN LOVIN'	256385
2 HOT BLONDES ONE BIG TOY	256404

256121 Screaming Orgasm



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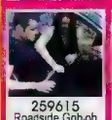
254887 Dont Moan Gobble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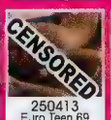

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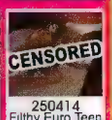

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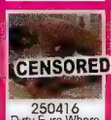

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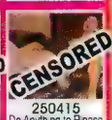

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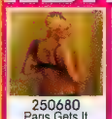
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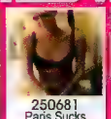
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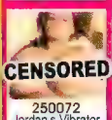
250684 Midnight Feast



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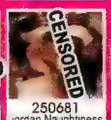

250681 Jordan Naughtiness

250066 Jordan Hard Action

MORE FILTHY VIDS!

EATS HER MISTRESS	256421
WATCH ME LICK & WAIT 4 IT	256431
HOT LESBIAN SESSION	256432
MESSY EATER	259450
WHILE THE BOSS IS AWAY SHE WILL PLAY	259758
LESBIAN FIRST	250983
SKIRT UP REAR ACTION	256399
SIT ON IT BABY	254830
GET A LOAD OF THIS	254832
SHOWER GIRL	254842
AWESOME DRILLING	254843
SHOW ME THE MONEY!	254844
WATCH ME PLAY	256091
BEND OVER BABY	256384
GOOD HAND ACTION	254829
GOBJOB	256415
LESBO FRENZY	255954
NAUGHTY FIVESOME ACTION	254898
POOLSIDE GANG BANG	255226
DIRTY GIRLS REAR ACTION	255218
DOGGIN IN THE WOODS	256430
HOT OUTDOOR ACTION	255098
FILTHY FOURSOME ACTION	255224
SKI LIFT GOBBLE	254890

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Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Ubisoft Romania
Price £50 | **Release** March 23
Multi-player 1-16 (online)

ON THE DISC
We'll review this on the disc next month
PS3/Reviews

Skies of arcadia As atmospheric as they can be when the smoke starts rising, the environments are strangely unengaging.

Blazing Angels Squadrons Of WWII

Realistic, but tedious, WWII shooter forces us to eject

Presumably it was nostalgia for the likes of *Wings* and *Secret Weapons Over Normandy* that inspired Ubisoft Romania to bless us with *Blazing Angels*. As Xbox 360 owners already know, this is a vacuous slice of tea-stained air combat short on personality, drama, and above all fun. But at least it's honest. It doesn't wait until you're actually in the thick of combat to tell you that the plane in which you're flying was built by a chimpanzee with a spanner in one hand and genitals in the other – the signs of such workmanship are there right from the start.

Having skipped through menus which look placeholder at absolute best, set your propeller in motion by literally drawing circles with the analogue stick and acquainted yourself with some basic arcade flight manoeuvres, you'll already know more about *Blazing Angels* than you'd prefer. It can't actually spell the word 'manoeuvre', for one thing, nor pull one off without risk of severe frame-rate drops or screen tearing. For the sake of an unobtrusive heads-up display, it keeps targeting reticules small – the result being that enemies need only pass before the monotone scenery to become all but invisible. You can always lock the camera to your target to help you zero in, but the problem then becomes one of simply holding course.

Hostile ground It's a simple shooter, but collisions kill.

War is hell

A year on since *Blazing Angels* debuted on 360, the PlayStation 3 version is only fractionally better. Its Sixaxis tilt support certainly gets off to a responsive and reliable start, but for all its novelty the thumbsticks are still more precise. There are two exclusive missions, eleven new aircraft and a bonus multi-player game type (a Base Defence mode to join the straight Dogfights and Co-op missions), but when the flight is this turbulent to begin with – objectives are still dull, the pacing's still laboured and the checkpoints poorly placed – it's better simply to just hit the eject button than battle on any further. Stick to *Ace Combat*.

Duncan Harris

Engine repair

You can hire co-pilots, one of whom – Joe – can repair your plane *mid-flight*. How very 'realistic'.

PSM3 Verdict

Blazing Angels contains...
Stiff upper lips | Amateur voiceovers
Murky colours | Sheer repetition

Overall A lazy port of a dull original – just what PlayStation 3's UK launch could do without.

52

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Electronic Arts | PS3 | March 23

Godfather: The Don's Edition

Just don't let The Don know you've got it

Publishers have to be careful choosing a subtitle for a game as it can have some negative implications. Call it *Complete* or *Special* and they're suggesting the original was incomplete and not special. Hence we get *The Don's Edition*. What EA mean here is 'We've put some more stuff in it', but that's not as snappy, as titles go.

Don weight

So just what have EA deemed to be fit only for heads of organised crime? Well, there are two additional rival families, five new hits, Shipyard and Railyard areas to explore and a Hit Squad option that allows you to call in four heavies to clean up any particularly messy situation. You can also use the Sixaxis to beat people up. Cranging people's heads off work surfaces is a most satisfying feeling.

Rather than being a revolution, then, *The Don's Edition* is rather more a refining of the experience that is the backbone of both the last game and this – rising from a simple hood to a major player in the Corleone family. This can be achieved by becoming an Enforcer (relies on violence) or an Operator (strong at negotiation) – as you gradually update your hoodlum's various skills, you'll have to make these choices.

In terms of building up business interests and shaping your empire, *The Godfather: The Don's Edition* has more depth and purpose than either *Scarface* or *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*. The trouble, however, is that the game pales in comparison in every other category. This is mainly due to the restrictions of The Godfather universe – tethered to the movie's history, it's naturally very sober in terms of style and attitude, and so lacks much of the excess or wit of its competitors. Throw some quite tired and frustrating mission design into the mix and the result is a game that's as easy to refuse as the PlayStation 2 version was. Shame, really. **Dave Harrison**

PSM3 Verdict

A few additions don't make this a must-buy. **66**

Game Republic | PS2 | Out now

Little Britain

We told you we wouldn't want this one

Minigames are the order of the day in Little Britain. For instance, guiding Vicky Pollard through her local park, on rollerskates, collecting CDs. Yeah, brilliant. Except the scores required to move on are preposterous. Other games include playing penalty kicks as the-man-who-thinks-he's-a-lady and performing diving stunts as Lou, the wheelchair-bound cohort of baffled care worker Andy. It's stupidly hard as well, which no party game should be. It's not even funny, especially the muffled repeated voice samples which grate after the first listen, not to mention the forty-third. Avoid at all costs. **Andy Kelly** **18**

VU Games | PSP | Out now

M.A.C.H.

It means *Modified Air Combat Heroes...*

***M.A.C.H.* sees you** compete as fighter planes and jets in a number of races and distinguishes itself through the quality of its production values, from the sun setting over a glacier in the frozen tundra, to the wealth of customisation options.

Races have a pleasingly tactical edge to them – you can either go mad with boost, or save it for barrel rolls to evade missiles – and with five difficulty levels, dogfights and the ability to pimp your stealth bomber, there's plenty to keep racing fans going. Only a slight lack of personality and a few motion sickness issues stop this scoring higher. **Dave Meikleham** **79**

RTL | PS2 | Out now

Alpine Ski Racing

A game that goes downhill fast

***Alpine Ski Racer* is** for the sort person who enjoys staying up until 2AM watching hot (or cold) snow-based action on Eurosport. Not only is it suitably authentic, allowing you to take the pro of your choice through the world cup or to create your own skier, but also manages to convey a terrific sensation of speed. It's a bit hardcore, mind, so be prepared to constantly finish in 48th place during your first few hours. If you can persist past the steep learning curve, though, you'll find a title of surprising depth, with Career, Arcade and Challenge modes. But unless you're a really dedicated skiing fan, go for *SSX Tricky*. **Dave Meikleham** **65**

EA | PS2 | March 30

The Fast And The Furious: Tokyo Drift

More like *The Slow And The Ambling*

It's been ages since the first movie and, if you like driving in straight lines in a lifeless Tokyo, then the wait has *definitely* been worth it. Does holding down a nitrous button for two seconds to burst into an unassailable lead sound appealing? Then you're in luck. The whole game suffers from a lack of challenge and speed, while the sparseness of traffic renders each race a battle against falling asleep. The cars do at least feel satisfyingly weighty, but it's easier to parallel park in a stretch limo than to corner any of these brutes. Deeply uninspiring, all in all. **Dave Meikleham** **51**

PSM3 Recommends

The best games from the last few months

Okami
Capcom | PS2
"Quite brilliant, with substance enough to live up to its stunning visuals. Peaceful, elegant and you'll play it for hours. The most beautiful game on PS2."
PSM3 Rating 95%

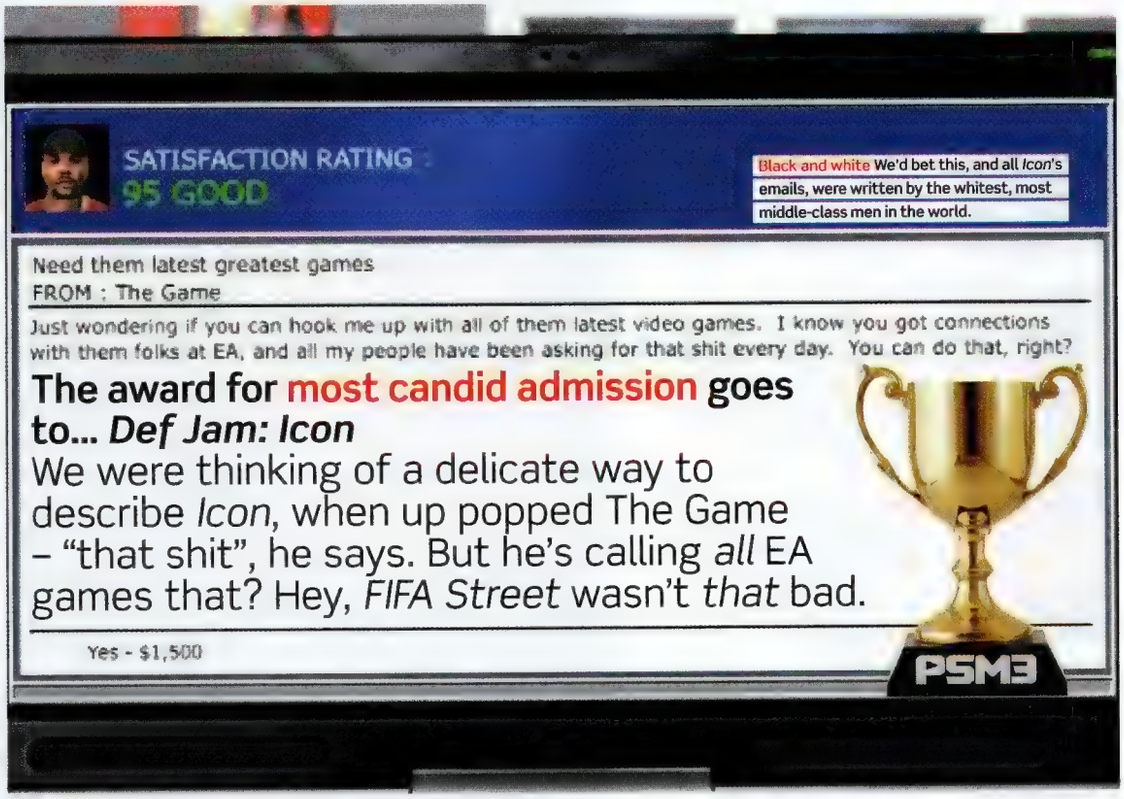
Virtua Fighter 5
Sega | PS3
"Technically flawless, the result of over a decade's evolution and perhaps the best scrapper ever. But *Virtua Fighter 5* is such an acquired taste."
PSM3 Rating 87%

Test Drive Unlimited
Atari | PS2
"A tropical paradise etched with 1000 miles of roads. A consuming driving experience that's not the most exciting, but makes up for it with its mellow side."
PSM3 Rating 85%

The Warriors PSP
"Satisfyingly brutal, but could give you cataracts after about an hour"

PSM3 Awards

The highlights (and lowlights) of this month's reviews


SATISFACTION RATING
95 GOOD
Black and white We'd bet this, and all Icon's emails, were written by the whitest, most middle-class men in the world.
Need them latest greatest games
FROM : The Game
Just wondering if you can hook me up with all of them latest video games. I know you got connections with them folks at EA, and all my people have been asking for that shit every day. You can do that, right?
Yes - $1,500
PSM3

The award for most candid admission goes to... *Def Jam: Icon*

We were thinking of a delicate way to describe *Icon*, when up popped The Game – "that shit", he says. But he's calling *all* EA games that? Hey, *FIFA Street* wasn't *that* bad.

Rockstar | PSP | Out now

The Warriors

Coming out to play on PSP

There's a different plot – about the founding of the gang itself – but *The Warriors* on PSP plays pretty much the same way as its PS2 brother. Find rivals, have a scrap, engage in some petty thuggery – mugging, graffiti, breaking into shops – then have another ruck. And it all works – the complex controls are mapped surprisingly efficiently to PSP, meaning combat is satisfyingly brutal. The only real problem, however, lies with the amount of time you spend squinting at the tiny map in the corner trying to find your way to your next target – it's enough to give you cataracts after about an hour. And if you've played the original to death, you won't see anything new in this version. Still, *The Warriors* retains its inherent 'coolness' and remains more than decent fun. Worth a shot. **David Cook**

77

Take-Two | PSP | Out now

Sid Meier's Pirates!

The good sort of software piracy

Quality real-time strategy games – actually quality games period – are rather more thin on the ground for PSP than we'd like. That's why we were so happy to see this little buccaneering beauty slip into our inbox this month. Based on the 1987 PC classic – which you might remember was recently revived on the original Xbox – *Pirates* sees you taking to the high seas and trying to pillage your way across the game's huge map.

Basically, *Pirates* is a massive adventure game, hung together by various real-time strategy elements. You cross the seas on your ship, then indulge in some cannon-or-sword based fighting with other pirates. When you're not doing that, there are minigames to play. These include duelling with a rival pirate captain, searching for buried treasure or dancing the night away with a local wench in a simple rhythm action game. There's loads to do, and if you've enough mates there's a four-player Wi-Fi mode to get to grips with as well.

It's not immediately gratifying, and the learning curve is a tad steep, but persevere and you'll find a PSP title well worth plundering your local games shop for. **Dave Meikleham**

80

The spit on your past award goes to...

Sonic The Hedgehog

We honestly don't hate Sonic. We want his games to be ace. But Sega keep making them worse. Sonic with a *human girlfriend*? *inter-species tongue sandwiches*? Would Nintendo treat Mario like this? Would they chuff.

The keeping PS2 alive award goes to...

God Of War 2

A shared award, really, because *Okami* and *FF12*, among others, are doing the same. But *God Of War 2* got us as excited as kids at Christmas this month – even more so than the imminent arrival of PS3. Buy this game. You must.

Hi-Score Table

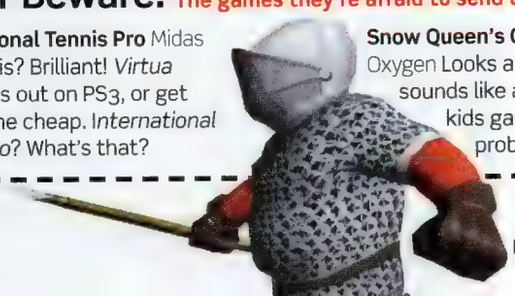
☐ God Of War 2	p62	93%
☐ GTA: Vice City Stories	p68	83%
☐ Burnout Dominator	p80	81%
☐ Sid Meier's Pirates	p87	80%
☐ M.A.C.H.	p86	79%
☐ The Warriors PSP	p87	77%
☐ F.E.A.R.	p78	72%
☐ SOCOM: Combined Assault	p70	69%
☐ Brian Lara 2007	p82	68%
☐ UEFA 2007	p66	67%
☐ Godfather: Don's Edition	p86	66%
☐ Alpine Ski Racer	p86	65%
☐ Blazing Angels	p84	52%
☐ The Fast And The Furious	p86	51%
☐ Def Jam: Icon	p74	49%
☐ Sonic The Hedgehog	p72	47%

Buyer Beware! The games they're afraid to send us

International Tennis Pro Midas
Like tennis? Brilliant! *Virtua Tennis 3* is out on PS3, or get *VT2* on the cheap. *International Tennis Pro*? What's that?

Snow Queen's Quest Oxygen
Looks and sounds like a rubbish kids game. So it probably is.

Winter Sports Oxygen
Just in time for Spring, it's *Winter Sports*. It offers "powder-punching music" and "commentary from Sue Thurle". Woah, hold us back.



Extended Play

Start

CELEBRATE

88 The mysteries of *Silent Hill* unravelled
The deeper meanings of Konami's psychological survival horror explored.

GENIUS

90 The ten most insania things in *Killer7*
Featuring castration and Morrissey, though not simultaneously.

EXPLOITS

94 The best ways to avoid the cops in *Need For Speed Carbon*
Give those infernal cops the slip, pronto.

SECRETS

96 Score the best goal ever in *Pro Evo 6*
We show you how to pull off the oh-so-tricky Rabona – every time.

SECRETS

97 PlayStation's most hidden secrets busted wide open
Including ghosts lurking in *Hitman: Contracts*.

SECRETS

97 Get dressed for the piste in *SSX3*
We show you the best unlockable outfits to wear on the slopes.

CLASSIC

98 Why *Max Payne* is the f*cked up film noir five years ahead of time
The comic-book shooter you *must* revisit.

NATION

100 Sony's barmiest TV commercial ever
It's the PS3 Euro launch campaign – see if it makes any sense to you.

PLAYSTATION CELEBRATION

Inside the mind of... Silent Hill

SPOILERS!
The following contains spoilers – do not read if you don't want to know each game's secrets.

There's more to the *Silent Hill* series than most people realise. If you play through it and take everything you see at face value – assuming that the writhing flesh sacks are just writhing flesh sacks – then you're missing out half the experience. Each game in the series revolves around psychological themes and everything your character witnesses, from bubble-headed nurses through ghostly apparitions to rusty wheelchairs, are all there for a specific reason, conjured up by the evil-infested town. This is because *Silent Hill* is what you bring to it; a place where the demons that torment a person's soul are made manifest to either forgive or condemn them. We look at the games, their underlying themes and what the town means to the four main characters.

SILENT HILL 1

Story Harry Mason, whilst driving to Silent Hill with his adopted daughter Cheryl, sees an apparition of a little girl in the middle of the road, crashes his car and is knocked unconscious. When he wakes up Cheryl is gone and the town is consumed by mist and swarming with monsters. Later, it's revealed that Cheryl is actually host to an evil deity, resurrected by a cult led by the girl's birth mother. When they revived the god, Samael, the once-peaceful tourist haven of Silent Hill became a ghost town haunted by the malevolent spirit of Cheryl – or Alessa, as she was named by her mother.

What it all means Harry's motivation is to find his missing daughter, but as the game goes on, survival becomes his first aim. When the siren blares and the town slips into 'The Otherside', Harry finds himself in a disturbing world born of Alessa's childhood trauma; namely, being used as the host for a demonic god by her insane cult leader mother. The monsters are manifestations of her childhood fears and the locations all hold a dark significance to her, including the school where she was bullied.

The endings
Bad: Harry lies dead in his Jeep. It was just a dream.
Bad+ Cheryl thanks Harry then disappears. He remains trapped in The Otherside.
Good: Alessa gives Harry a new baby, then creates a portal for him to escape through.
Good+ Harry and Cybil go back in time and start a new life together.

SILENT HILL 2

Story James Sunderland visits Silent Hill after receiving a letter from his wife Mary, who died of a mysterious disease three years earlier. He makes his way into town and discovers that it's deserted, enveloped in mist and full of monsters. He meets other characters along the way, including Laura, a small girl who was in hospital at the same time as Mary, and Maria – who looks identical to Mary. James also finds himself stalked by Pyramid Head, a monster with, well, a pyramid for a head. At the end of the game it's revealed that Mary didn't actually die of her disease – she was suffocated by James, who couldn't stand to see her suffer and wanted to put her out of her misery.

What it all means Everything in *SH2* is a product of James' twisted mind. His frustration at his wife's body being ravaged by the disease – and resulting sexual frustration – is made explicit in the game's monsters, who are all made up of female body parts – plunging necklines, long slender legs and so on. Pyramid Head – whose appearance is a deformation of Civil War-era executioners – serves as his judge, condemning him to witness the death of Maria multiple times throughout the game. Depending on the ending, James is either forgiven and released from his personal hell, or doomed to repeat it for eternity. In that respect, James' *Silent Hill* is a kind of purgatory.

The endings
Leave: Mary forgives James and he leaves Silent Hill with Laura.
Maria: James leaves with Maria, but she inherits Mary's illness.
In Water: James commits suicide by driving his car into Toluca Lake.
Rebirth: James performs an ancient ritual to bring Mary back to life.

SILENT HILL 3

Story Set seventeen years after the events of the first game, *Silent Hill 3* revolves around Heather, daughter of Harry Mason. A private detective called Douglas Cartland has been hired by the cult that resurrected Samael in the first game to track her down. Under a new leader, Claudia, they want to continue the ritual thwarted by Harry in *Silent Hill 1*. This is because Heather, once called Cheryl, is actually Alessa, the demon's former host. In order to bear a god for a second time, Heather's heart must be full of hatred. The game is a series of events designed to by the cult to achieve this, the most brutal of which is the murder of Harry. But, in the tradition of her old man, she scuppers the cult's plans and the demon is not reborn. She leaves Silent Hill with Douglas, choosing not to live in fear any longer, and takes back her old name, Cheryl Mason.

What it all means This is actually the most straightforward story in the *Silent Hill* saga, and that was intentional. The developers wanted to create something completely different to the bleak, slow-paced and psychological nature of *Silent Hill 2*. The biggest mystery, however, is Valtiel. This faceless, disfigured monster stalks Heather as she shifts between the real world and The Otherside. His concern isn't with Heather herself, rather the remnants of Samael within her. He's a watchman for the cult, ensuring the god is reborn and not damaged. This is why you see him drag her body away whenever you die in the game. The monsters don't relate in any specific way to Heather, but some of the areas she explores do – for example, the Lakeside Amusement Park where her father previously found himself in the first *Silent Hill*.

The endings
Normal: The god is reborn, but Heather defeats it. She leaves with Douglas.
Possessed: Heather is consumed by the god and murders Douglas.

SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM

Story Henry Townshend is trapped in his flat, room 302 of South Ashfield Heights. After three days, a mysterious hole appears. He crawls in and finds himself in a twisted world of monsters and evil. As it turns out, the room used to be occupied by a child, Walter Sullivan, who's been abandoned by his parents. Walter thinks the room itself is his mother (obviously), and that by murdering 21 people – an ancient ritual known as the 21 sacraments – he can awaken her. Along with his neighbour Eileen, Henry tries to stop him. But as Walter himself is the eleventh victim (he used what he calls the Ritual of Assumption to avoid death and become immortal) Henry has to make him mortal to finish him.

What it all means *The Room* wasn't originally intended to be part of the *Silent Hill* series, and so links to previous games are slightly clumsy. Walter was mentioned in a document in *SH2*, and Henry visits areas around Silent Hill several times, including the edge of Toluca Lake. There are also links between the cult that Walter was part of and the cult that tried to resurrect the god in the first game – they were in opposition to each other. A fan theory is that the darkness enveloping Silent Hill is extending beyond the town. Ashfield, where the game is set, is "just a few hours" from Silent Hill.

The endings
Escape: Walter dies, Henry escapes to the real world and Eileen survives.
Mother: Same as 'escape', but Henry's apartment remains haunted.
Eileen: Henry returns to the real world, but Eileen dies.
21 Sacraments: Walter completes the ritual and Henry and Eileen die.

PSP

Silent Hill: Origins

This PSP prequel, now due out in autumn time, follows truck driver Travis O'Grady who stumbles upon the town while on a routine delivery. The town brings to life bad memories from his past, and the developers promise it'll be more like *Silent Hill 2* than other games in the series.

Silent Hill 5

So what does the future hold for the *SH* series? Obviously the disturbing visuals will be more eerie and atmospheric than ever, but we're more interested in where the plot's going. If the *SH4* theory that the town's evil is spreading rings true, perhaps it'll be set in yet another town? Hopefully not. We want to return to the foggy streets of Silent Hill. Akira Yamaoka, producer and composer at Team Silent, has hinted at a return to *SH2*'s psychological routes, and an interest in creating a "sunny environment gone wrong".

PS3

10 reasons why Killer7 will melt your brain

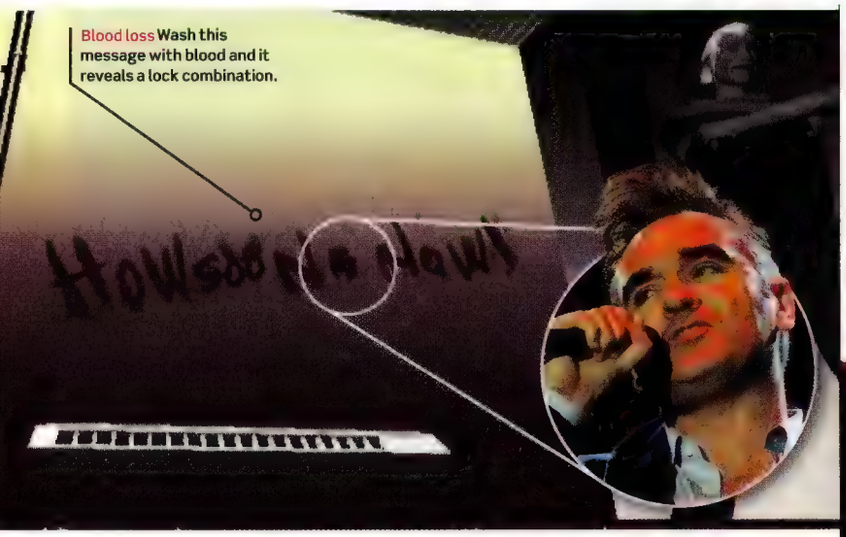
Leon Hurley

PLAYSTATION GENIUS

Pub Capcom
Dev Capcom
FYI PS2 | 2005 | PSM64 83%
Killer7 is a slick, innovative shooter. Strange 'on-rail' controls combine with stylish cel-shaded graphics to create a rewarding, bizarre adventure.

1 THE PLOT IS INSANE

The Killer 7 – a team of lethal assassins lead by a wheelchair-bound old man called Harman – are hired to kill a terrorist called Kun Lan. The trouble is, the seven might be imaginary personalities, created by Harman. Later Garcian, Harman's second-in-command, is revealed as the reincarnation of a schoolboy who offed the *real* Killer 7 years ago before taking his own life. Don't ask. Then there's the bit about an illegal trade in organs, a cult leader with acidic blood and a conspiracy to use the Japanese school system to control the US presidential elections. And you thought Lost was complicated...

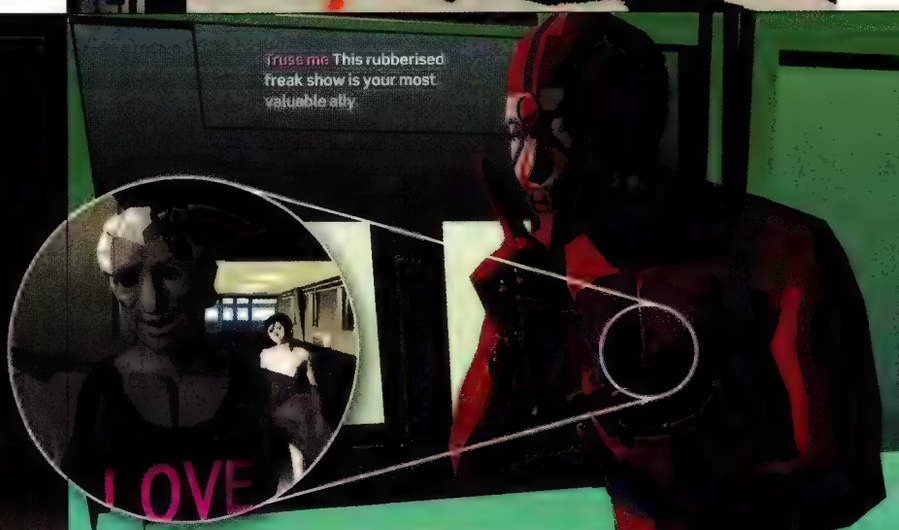


3 THE AMOUNT OF BLOOD IS DAFT

The enemies, called Heaven Smiles, have a weak point. Blast it and they'll explode into cascades of 'thick blood'. This can then be used to upgrade abilities by running it through a blood machine. Shoot a Smile anywhere else and it produces 'thin blood' which tops up health or charges special attacks. Kaede Smith can also slit her wrists, creating gushing fountains of claret to remove barriers. Anyone need a plaster?

2 MORRISSEY IS EVERYWHERE

Early on, the message "How soon is now" – a song by arch-miserabalist Morrissey's old band The Smiths – is found as part of a puzzle. There are also multiple memos to find, all titled after Smith's songs ('Still Ill', 'Rusholme Ruffian' and 'Meat Is Murder', for example). And finally, all the Killer 7 have the same last name, Smith, making them *The Smiths*. Why? They're producer Suda 51's favourite band. Obviously.



4 IT'S GOT SOME VERY WRONG SEX

60-year-old Harman lives in a trailer with his 20-something carer Samantha. She appears in two guises. As a nurse she's all love – tending to the ageing assassin's every need. However, when she appears dressed like trailer trash she insults Harman and beats him. At one point she's discovered noisily bouncing the old man's bones in her 'bad' costume while making sexy faces at the camera. Grim.

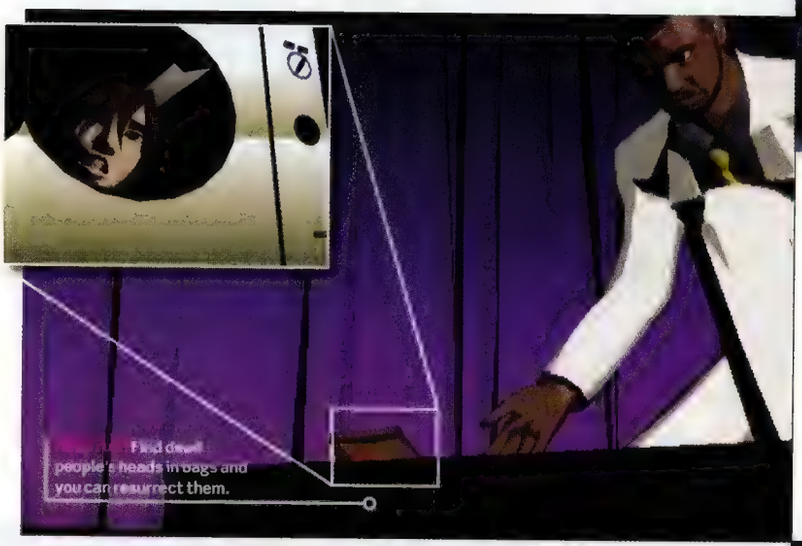
5 THE SIDEKICKS ARE A GIMP AND A GHOST

This fella, Iwazaru, appears as a guide. He's a trussed up, rubber suit-wearing freak who descends from the ceiling on a rope and always starts by saying "Master, we're in a tight spot..." – even when it's good news. Despite being gagged and having his eyes sewn shut – a handicap for most people – in fact he's pretty useful. He's joined by Travis, the spirit of the first person the Smiths killed. He passes you clues via t-shirt slogans, as you do.

ON THE DISC
Keep an eye out for future Capcom PS3 games from PlayStation

6 YOU MUST KEEP YOUR HEAD

If any of the Smiths get blown up by a Heaven's Smile, their heads are left behind in a paper bag. Garcian has the ability to collect the bonces, carry them in his briefcase and resurrect characters at the nearest save point. Lose Garcian and it's game over. Then there's Susie Sumner, a disembodied cranium that regularly turns up in drawers and cupboards to hand out power-ups, in the shape of rings pulled from her mouth.

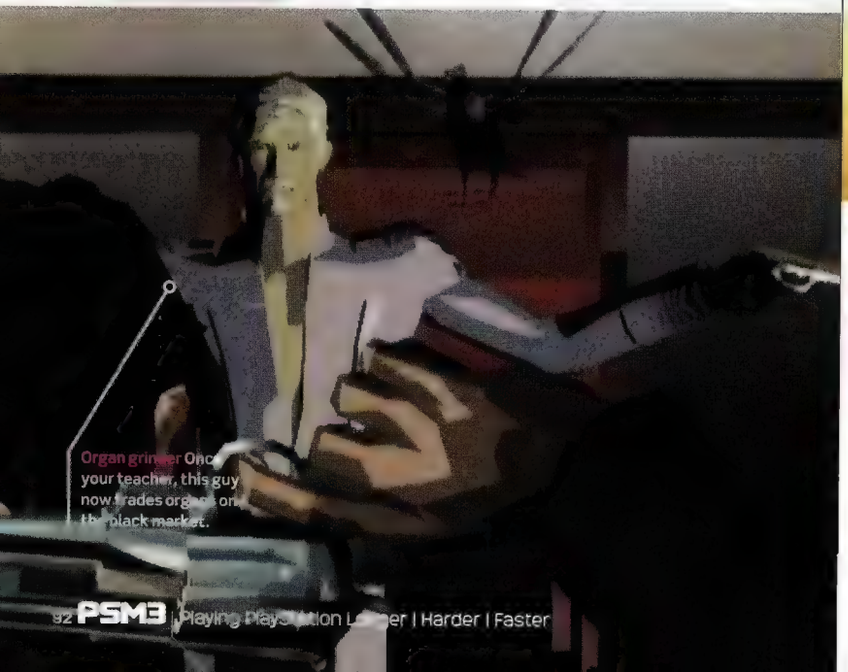


7 THE POWER RANGERS DIE

Sort of. Towards the end The Punishing Rangers: The Handsome Men turn up. They look suspiciously like you-know-who, but are actually government super soldiers turned terrorists. Hence the Killer 7 are sent to murder them. The battle ends when Mask De Smith gets a special power-up, enabling him to leather the lot of 'em. He also gets a new costume consisting of pants. Nothing else, just pants. Sexy.

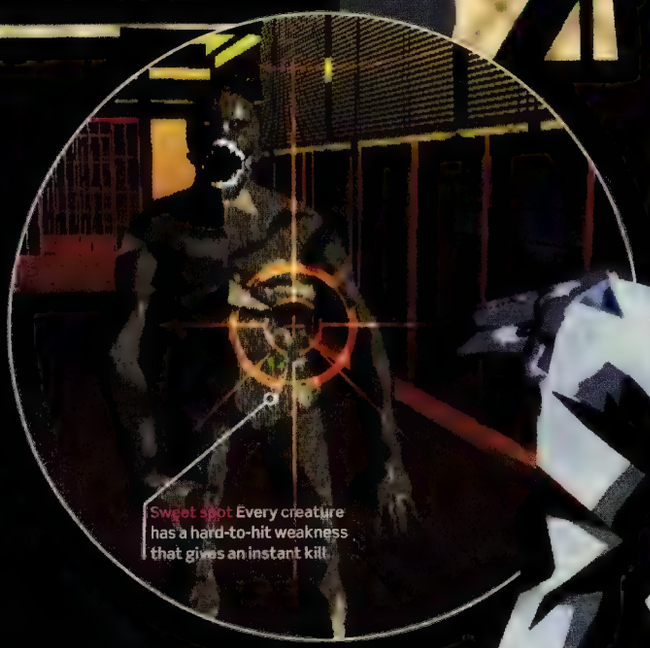
8 IT'S FULL OF PIGEONS

Pigeons are the crazy-eyed lunatics of the bird world. In *Killer7*, they appear constantly, ferrying memos that contain cryptic information on the game's back story – and each is named after a different Bond girl. There's also a boss fight with Curtis Blackwood, a former mentor, where a fluttering, twitchy dove on his shoulder controls the battle.



9 A MAN HAS HIS 'NADS SHOT OFF

One of the last bosses is Greg Nightmare – now *that's* a great name – an education minister found hanged in a school hall. To defeat him, you've got to shoot at his legs to make him swing on the rope around his neck. When he's moving fast enough his pants fall off, revealing a swollen, glowing crotch to the world. To defeat him, blast his family jewels off. Talk about well hung...



Sweet spot Every creature has a hard-to-hit weakness that gives an instant kill

Secret smile The Heaven's Smiles are invisible until you can reveal them.

10 EVERYONE'S HAPPY

The Heaven's Smiles themselves are mutated, gibbering, human bombs with rictus grins carved on their faces. They laugh a lot. Especially just before grabbing someone in an explosive embrace. Ka-booom.

The ones we didn't pick...

Grasshillmoor
One boss battle involved [illegible] explosive barrels in defence [illegible] only way to defeat them [illegible] shoot one and stop [illegible] is this meant [illegible] to [illegible] it exposes a weakness to fill with lead.

Number one with a bullet
A portal called the Vinculum [illegible] regularly [illegible] meeting a [illegible] they're joined by Kevin Otis [illegible] the Gaze [illegible] tubes are [illegible] and one of the best tunes [illegible]

Backed by Jack
Killer7 was cited by [illegible] as "[illegible] responsible for the deterioration of [illegible] society" because "[illegible] blood [illegible] immoral [illegible] website was [illegible]

EMAIL PSM3 @
Disagree with our choice? Then send us your picks
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

ON THE DISC
See *Need For Speed Carbon* on the disc now!

PLAYSTATION EXPLOITS

The coolest ways to lose the cops in NFS Carbon

Justin Towell

EMAIL PSM3
Want a game exploded in ludicrous detail? Tell us.
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Pub EA
Dev EA
FYI PS2 | 2006 | PSM79 82%
Need For Speed Carbon has been in the top few positions in the all-format sales charts since its release and doesn't look like moving. Buy a car, pimp it till it glows then cane it through a neon-bathed city. Much like *NFS Underground*. OK, we won't start that again. Sheesh

FLEE THE POLICE The smoothest moves around

► The cops can be really hard to shake in *Carbon*. They jostle, they lurk, they lay spike strips – everything you could really do without when you're trying to win an illegal street race. Friends – it's time to fight the power.

Cop dodge... Got company

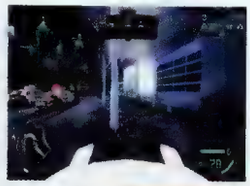
Floor it So you've spent too long doing your speed demon turn in one area, in one car. Then there's only going to be one outcome. Yup - looks like it's time for a car chase. Bring it, baby

Cop dodge... Smash 'em

Floor it First thing's first – while the pursuit is still fresh, there's a good chance you can smash the couple of cars you're chasing at first. Any standard pursuit vehicle will only withstand a few knocks.

Cop dodge... Block rocking

Floor it This also works with roadblocks. Just ram cars at full speed and they're likely to flip, resulting in an instant kill and a 'cost to state' bonus. Just make sure you listen for the location of the spike.



Cop dodge... Break it up

Floor it By far the best way to lose your tail is to find the pursuit-breaker points on your map. They look like little orange pizza slices. Get to them and you'll lose your new law-enforcing chums.

Cop dodge... Dream beam

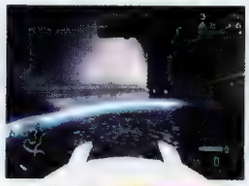
Floor it Smash into a support beam and you'll be treated to a cut-scene showing the destruction. These aren't the slickest you've ever seen, but dropping a doughnut on a cop car is cool.

Cop dodge... Pipe dream

Floor it Pursuit breakers, when used correctly, suddenly leave you with an empty evade meter. Check your map for backup – the car you've just crushed can't see you, so double back if you like.

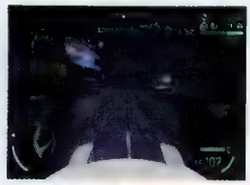
Cop dodge... Criss-cross

Floor it Sadly, simply driving well and not hitting this will rarely end a pursuit. But it's necessary to do this in the Challenge mode to keep a pursuit going over 12 minutes, so any practise helps.



Cop dodge... Hideaway

Floor it When you do eventually shake them, check your map for the 'whole pizza' icon. (We're hungry, OK?) This will show you a little tucked-away sweet-spot that the fuzz won't buzz.



Cop dodge... Safe place

If you know your way around the town well enough (or activate your GPS), you can make your way to a safe house. This does exactly what it says on the tin, but it's more like quitting than winning.

Cop dodge... You sure?

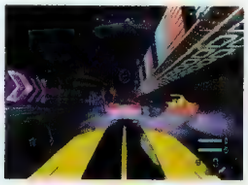
Floor it The game then very kindly asks if you're sure. If you've been chased for 100 miles by the cops, the answer is almost certainly yes. But you can get your breath back, say no, then try to do it properly.

Cop dodge... Circuit break

Floor it If you've tried the Challenge mode, you'll know that it can indeed be very 'challenging'. Take this example – the Gold run on Circuit, which is a two-lap race around Starlight Street. Sound easy?

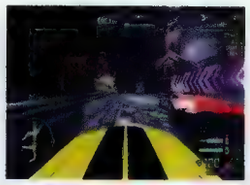
Cop dodge... Old banger

Floor it Wrong. See that car? That's the worst-handling vehicle in the game. Look, it's sliding even before it starts, which doesn't bode well. But you're going to win with it. Let's have some confidence, eh?



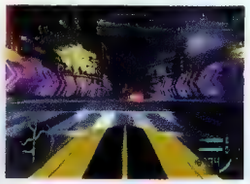
Cop dodge... Faster!

Floor it And they're off! Use the right stick for accelerating and you can make the revs flash yellow – do that as the flag is dropped and get a good start. But swerve or you'll be up that car's exhaust.



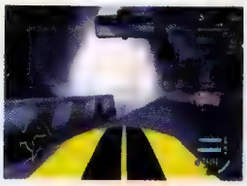
Cop dodge... Go nitro

Floor it The trick is to conserve nitrous and use it mainly for acceleration, instead of a higher top-speed. You'll notice other cars do this, so use it sparingly, but make sure you do use it – it's your key to victory.



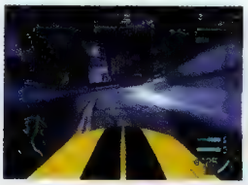
Cop dodge... Good hood

Floor it We're using the hood cam in this instance. Some cars look great externally and you may want to see your ride in action, but when it's as slippery as this, you'll need to judge your slides, rally-style.



Cop dodge... Wall fall

Floor it Don't worry if you hit the walls a lot. If you feel like you're heading that way, steer into the slide and try to hit the wall with the flat side of your car. Don't keep holding right or you'll do zig-zags.

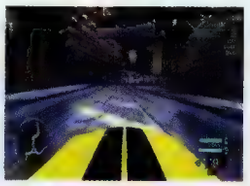


Cop dodge... Line 'em up

Floor it This isn't the most realistic racer around, but a grasp of driving lines will help. The car's never going to turn neatly around these chicanes, so try to keep in a straightish line going through them.

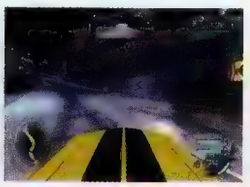
Cop dodge... Hot pursuit

Floor it If you should find yourself in the lead, pursuit breakers will greatly boost your chances of winning. You may not get the cut-scene here, but they still work if they connect with your rivals.



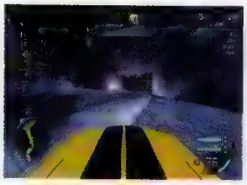
Cop dodge... Cut it out

Floor it We've got two massive shortcuts that will give you a better chance of victory. Bet you want to know where they are, yes? Well, after this bit you'll come to a left-hander and there, invitingly...



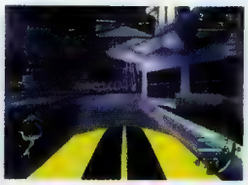
Cop dodge... Park up

Floor it ...is the entrance to the car park. You might want to save this one for the second lap, as once your rivals see, they'll be wise to your trickery and exploit the same trick for themselves next time.



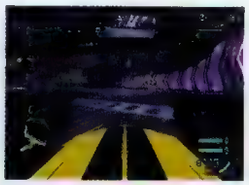
Cop dodge... The leader

Floor it You'll need to keep it fairly straight through here, but keep left so you've got an easy line through the right-handed exit. If you've done it right, you should hurtle into the lead.



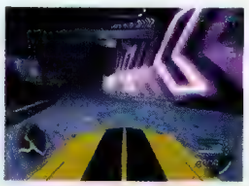
Cop dodge... Final cut

Floor it There's one more brilliant short-cut on this track, which gives you a last-ditch lunge at the win, even from quite a long way back. What? You want to know where it is? OK then...



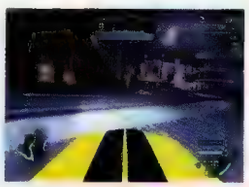
Cop dodge... Alley oop

Floor it Right near the end of the lap, you come to this long left-hander. But don't even attempt to hit the apex. There's a well-hidden alleyway on the right, so hug the neon barrier. But keep your speed up.



Cop dodge... Parallel lines

Floor it There it is – you're in. It doesn't look like much because you're running parallel to the road where the other racers are. In fact, they're a little way ahead of you.



Cop dodge... Winner!

Floor it You come flying out pointing straight at the exit of the final chicane. Provided you've kept your momentum up, you can leapfrog the leader here and take the win a few metres up the hill.

NFS FAQ

Q How do I win in Drift mode? I keep hitting walls

A Drift mode is basically [illegible] reason [illegible]

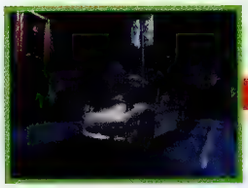
Q Is it possible to get the boss car's pink slips every time? I keep having to reload and do it again.

A Yes it is. Although I've had a few [illegible]

GameAmmo

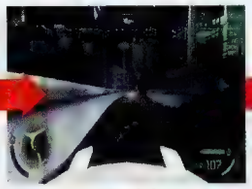
"In total, there are 54 vehicles in *NFS: Carbon*"

JUMPS Big air opportunities



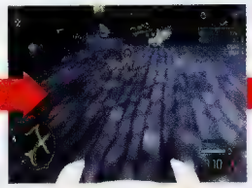
Our Car Everyone loves jumping cars. Imagine if the Dukes of Hazzard had been restricted to just driving. Dead boring. So here's how to get airborne quickly and feel like a god within five minutes.

Step 1... In the main
Race one – Main Street, home of one of the best jumps in the game. Near the end of the lap, you'll notice an alleyway to your right...



Step 2... Speed demon
Obviously, the faster you're going, the more air you're going to get so make sure you keep it neat through here. Use nitrous for even bigger air.

Step 3... Airtime
Take in the city from above in slow motion and make a mental note to spend some time making your car look cooler. You're actually saving time here too.



Step 4... Bumpy landings
The landing can be a bump, so try to keep it straight. As you can see, we're coming in an angle, which isn't the cleverest thing to do. Better brace for impact...

Step 5... Bunch of shunts
Ouch – that's gotta hurt. Damn exciting, though. It's worth noting your rivals can roll after a bad jump, so if they're around, give them a shunt.

ENFORCERS Cop a load of these guys

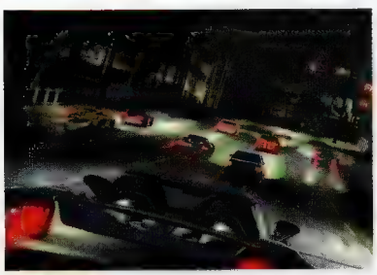
Civic Cruiser They're not too smart and they don't take much to immobilise, but get caught out and they'll bust you. If you get cornered, reverse and turn to break the 'busted' bar.

Police Rhino These guys are easy to flip, so try ramming them at speed. A good way to do this is to trigger the speedbreaker by clicking in the stick.

Police Interceptor These guys are almost stuck to the ground at low speed. They'll try to ram you and box you in... and you're in trouble if they do.

Police Undercover Corvette If you get Heat Level 6, you'll get these bad boys to avoid. They're after your ride... or your life. Don't let them get either. Especially the latter.

NEXT-GEN The PS3 difference exposed



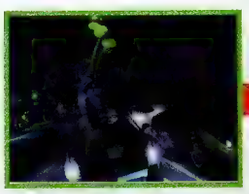
Grid of all right The PS2 version is the best, but you do get some new features on PS3. Most obvious are the car-filled grids, but you'll rarely see more than four in your line of vision.

Star cars The car models on PS3 look amazing, noticeably better than Xbox 360's plasticky vehicles. Just look at the reflections and rounded wheel arches.

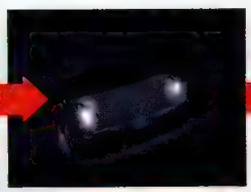
Signs of the times Hi-def display makes everything look really detailed and you can read all the shop signs properly. But PS2 does a great job of approximating the visuals.

Foot to the draw Of course, PS3's draw distances are way better and looking out over the city from the highest roads is just beautiful, while PS2 can look a little glitchy and low in detail.

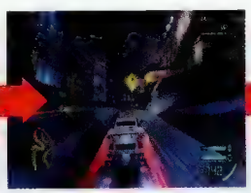
BEST CAR The Lamborghini Gallardo



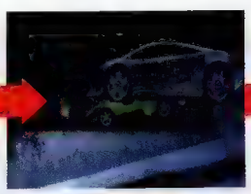
If you can get your hands on the Gallardo, then you definitely should. This thing flies round corners, sticks to the road like its tyres are made of sticky tape and has a mean nitrous kick.



Lambo... Simply the best
These poor cars don't know what's about to hit them. They'll be lucky to finish ten seconds behind us, the way we're revving up here.

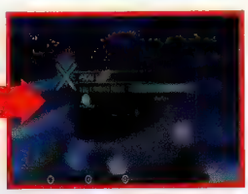


Lambo... Boost
Boost! Yeah, this is what the game's all about. There's an insane amount of speed blur and just look at the stream of red from your tail lights.



Lambo... High times
We're going so fast now, we're passing our opponents while airborne. At this point, put down the controller and say "Look, no hands!" for extra kudos.

Lambo... Night rider
The game starts to feel very serene. You get into the zone, the moon beams down at you and your headlights pick out trees in the darkness. All at about 180mph.



Cop dodge... For the win
Just as we predicted, it's an easy win. Shame we scratched the paintwork, though. But damage will be returned to showroom sheen at the next race.

AUTOSCULPT Make your ride your own

OK, so your car looks way too normal. Want to make it better? Well, first a word of warning – we've had this mode corrupt our save file twice now, so make sure you have a back-up...

Sculpt... Rub a hub-hub
The modding aspect could take over your life as you warp wheel trims and widen hubcaps until it already looks 100 times more badass than before.

Sculpt... All line
See the glowing lines? Anything like that can be manipulated. The temptation is to add more air intakes until the car looks like Swiss cheese. Less is more.

Sculpt... The back end
Not only can you change the overall style of your car's tush, but you can then go prodding around with dimensions and tweak it until it's perfect.

Sculpt... Spoilt rotten
Once you like the rear end , you can change every aspect of the spoiler too. Of course, it helps if you've unlocked a good one beforehand...

Sculpt... Vinyl countdown
And there's the finished result. Now you just need to unlock some cool vinyls or some lovely pearlescent paint and you'll be the torque of the town.

ON THE DISC
Football? No. 8-Ball? Yep. It's Mid-Street Nonsense!

PLAYSTATION SECRETS

Humiliating your opponent with a stylish 'Rabona' shot in PES6

Alvaro Recoba here isn't even in the starting line-up for Inter Milan, but he's one of the only players capable of a 'Rabona' i.e. crossing your kicking leg behind your standing leg as you shoot. He's also one of PES developer Seabass' favourite players, so it's no wonder he's equipped with this trick.

"The single most beautiful finish in *PES*"

1 Positioning...

Angle management Darting past the opposition's defence is difficult enough, but you'll need to leave them in your wake to find the time to pull off this special move. Turn away from the goalie as shown above to put Recoba on his redundant right foot.

2 Striking...

Hot shot From the perfect position, hit ⓞ and Recoba will automatically swing his left boot behind his right leg to perform this impossi-goal. Warning: trying this in real-life *will* result in you chewing ground and looking like a tool in front of your mates

3 Goooooooooal!

Back of the net With the keeper rooted by the shock of such an audacious drive, the ball flies past him, off the crossbar and into the goal. It's the single most beautiful finish in the entire game and even the most pan-handed PS2 gamer can do it. Beautiful

PlayStation's best kept secrets uncovered every month

Weirdness › **Hitman: Contracts** › Ghosts, cardboard and mime artists

In missions 2, go to the bathroom at the top right of the map. Look in the mirror. A ghost – eek!

Do the training mission with a silent assassin rating to get the instant-kill, er, cardboard tube.

Head to the right of the final mission's map – it's a mime artist. Mime artists deserve death.

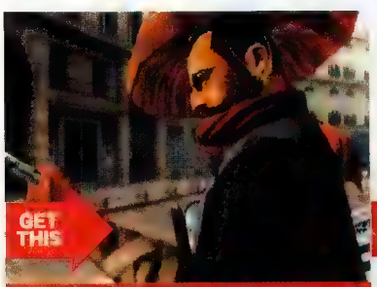
Moolah › **Maximo Vs Army Of Zin** › Infinite Death coins

Head over to the Sanctuary level and complete it. You can do it. Fight!

Well done. Now head to the churchyard and mosey to the right of the church door.

Get the Death Icon from the chest. Save and quit. Return to find another. Repeat until rich.

'Fashion' › **Onimusha 3** › Secret costumes



Finish the game with a rank above B to unlock this ancient Japanese outfit for Jacques.

Finish with any of Kaori's costumes to get this cowboy outfit. Yee-haw, and so forth.

Finish with all 3 Jacks to unlock Michelle in the tiny towel. Steady, lads, she's not actually real.

From zero to hero in... SSX3

The exquisite fashion of top lady Kaori, from peak one to peak three.

The sassy girl starts casual. Perfect for carving up peak one's gentle slopes.

All the glamour of the pro boarding circuit is displayed in Kaori's Paris Hilton look.

Kaori plunders her heritage, with this Memoirs Of a Geisha-style outfit.

Who says you can't trick or treat on the slopes? Kaori dons this pumpkin number.

The effort of reaching peak three has taken its toll, and Kaori wears *this*. Lunacy.

The Top 5

Cheats you *must* know

1 Canis Canem Edit
Unlock all outfits

While playing the game, press L1, L1, R1, L1, L1, L1, R2, R2 on controller two to unlock all clothes. Then press any button to return the game to normal speed.

2 Tony Hawk's Project 8
Unlock all specials

Enter "yougotitall" as a code to unlock and own all specials in the shop.

3 Capcom Classics Collection Vol 2
Unlock all cheats

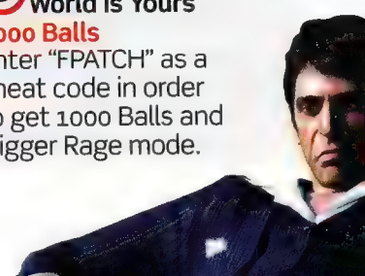
At the title screen, press ←, →, ↑, ↓, L1, R1, L1, R1. The cheats, tips, artwork, and sound tests for all games will be unlocked.

4 Naruto: Ultimate Ninja
Alternate costumes

At the character selection screen, hold L1+R1 while choosing a character. In Free Battle or Mission mode, hold L2 and R1 simultaneously and then press ⊗ while selecting your character

5 Scarface: The World Is Yours
1000 Balls

Enter "FPATCH" as a cheat code in order to get 1000 Balls and trigger Rage mode.



ON THE DISC
Check out the *Payne*-inspired *Stranglehold* today.

PLAYSTATION CLASSIC

Why Max Payne is the coolest f*cked up film noir on PS2

Nathan Ditum

Pub Rockstar | **Dev** Remedy
FYI PS2 | 2002 | PSM3 19 82%
The third-person cop shooter that impressed with its comic-strip feel and excellent use of Bullet Time. Check it out.

An NYPD chopper thunders over Liberty Island, heading towards a scene of wailing sirens and crackling police radios. Reaching the commotion it swoops skywards, the camera locking in on a lone figure standing on the edge of a nearby rooftop, shotgun in hand. "They were all dead," the voice-over begins. "The final gunshot was an exclamation mark to everything that had led to this point. I released my finger from the trigger... and then it was over."

So opens *Max Payne* – dialogue buzzing, visuals flashing and the dark, rumbling atmosphere promising this will be the meanest of rides. As beginnings go, it's a belter, starting in the present but with an irresistible invitation to dig up the past. "To make any sense of it I had to go back three years," Max explains. "Back to the night the pain started." And back we go...

Max's history begins to unravel with the first of the game's trademark graphic-novel inserts. Three years ago he was a regular cop, before coming home one night to find his wife and baby murdered by junkies high on a new designer drug called Valkyr. Max transfers to the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) to fight the illegal trade that killed his family, and ends up deep undercover in the mafia. One night a meet goes wrong, his police handler is murdered and he's framed for the shooting. Cover blown and nowhere to turn, Max tools up and determines to clear his name by finding the real killer. It soon becomes clear that the set-up, the appearance of Valkyr and even the death of his family are all connected, and it's down to Max to blow the whole thing wide open.

EMAIL PSM3 @
What do you think of *Max Payne*? Let us know:
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Here comes the Payne

Of course, a story like that doesn't make *Max Payne* the coolest game on PS2 – but the *way* it's told does. In choosing to lay down its heavy noir tale through gritty comic-strip narration, the game was way ahead of the cultural curve. This was before Frank Miller became the celebrated pulp-geek hero he is today – before he teamed up with Robert Rodriguez to deliver the dazzling Sin City movie, before Batman

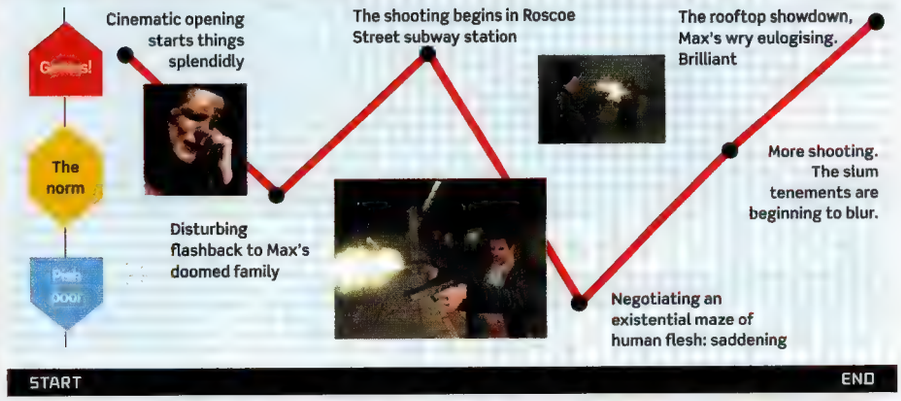
The defining moment...

Your first bullet time leap

This is the moment you realise what the game's all about, in terms of action at least. Time slows with a drawn-out whoosh and you arc through the air while pumping out round after round. Our favourite moment? Leaping backwards, body parallel to the ground, and firing between our shoes.

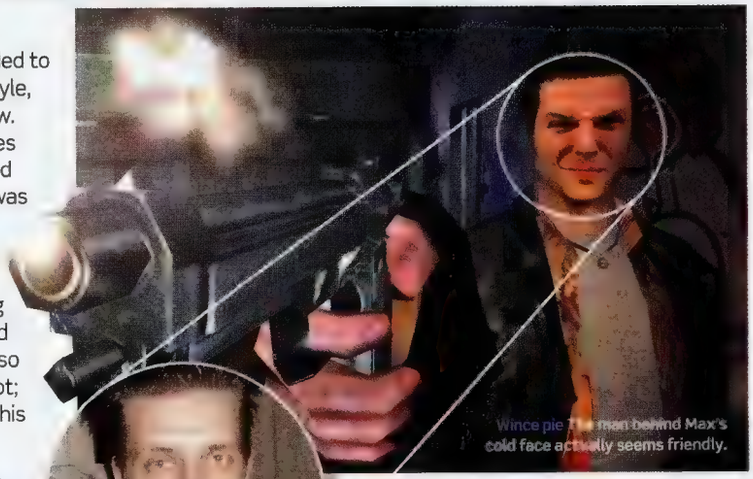
Duck for cover Or, in this case, right over it, spraying bullets.

The *Jak and Daxter* Bell Curve of Genius


Genius!
The norm
Pain in the poon
Cinematic opening starts things splendidly
Disturbing flashback to Max's doomed family
The shooting begins in Roscoe Street subway station
Negotiating an existential maze of human flesh: saddening
The rooftop showdown, Max's wry eulogising. Brilliant
More shooting. The slum tenements are beginning to blur.
START
END

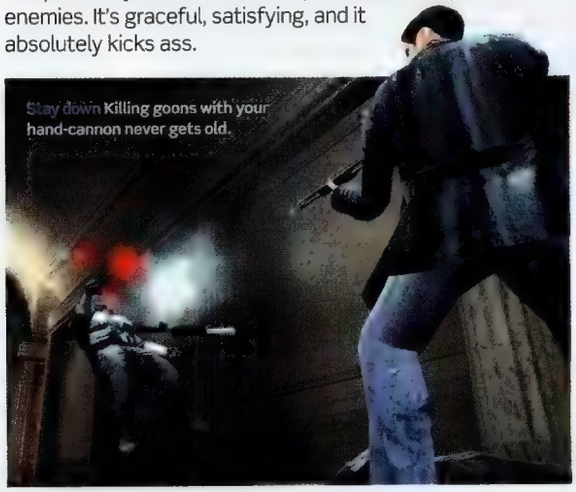
Begins stole all the best bits from his Dark Knight Returns and before Hollywood decided to film 300. In championing the graphic-noir style, *Max Payne* blazed a trail others would follow.

Developer Remedy created the sequences by taking posed live-action photographs and applying graphical touches on top. Money was tight, so Max himself was played by the game's writer, Sam Lake. Having come up with the hard-like-tempered-steel patter which underpins the game's twisting narrative, Lake also provided the pained and permanently wincing face that delivered it so convincingly. The game owes him some debt; heroes simply don't come any cooler than this wise-cracking, rock-bottom fall guy.


Wince pie The man behind Max's cold face actually seems friendly.

Actions are louder than words

Crucially, Max doesn't just talk the talk – he also does action brilliantly. For all the chatter surrounding *Stranglehold*'s efforts to capture the balletic fluidity of John Woo's violence, the fact is *Max Payne* did it almost flawlessly five years ago. More influenced by The Matrix than Hong Kong's premier action-man (although one of the difficulty settings is named after Woo's classic Hard-Boiled) *Max Payne* implements its own version of bullet time that makes possible all manner of acrobatics. Sounds warp and elongate, muzzle burst flames and flashes from your weapon and you dive, twist and pirouette to target your enemies. It's graceful, satisfying, and it absolutely kicks ass.


Stay down Killing goons with your hand-cannon never gets old.

What really marks *Max Payne* out as something special, though, is its ability to get inside your head and do unpleasant things. The game includes several significantly upsetting moments. Twice in the story Max is drugged with Valkyr and experiences feverish nightmares, which you have to play through. These levels consist of an empty black expanse, featureless apart from a thin trail (of blood? Intestine?) suspended in the void. Slip off the narrow path and you fall to oblivion. Somewhere in the nothingness a baby wails. Equally head-wrong, if not as disturbing, is the self-reflexive narrative spiral which sees Max become aware that he exists in a fiction. "The truth split my skull open, a glaring green light washing the lies away," he describes. "All of my past was just fragmented still shots, words hanging in the air like balloons. I was in a graphic novel. Funny as hell, it was the most horrible thing I could think of."

And it really *is* horrible – but brilliant. From the get-go it's clear that *Max Payne*'s storytelling is of the highest order, and these unconventional – OK, terrifying – sequences drive the point home. The fact that the game is a dab hand at action too is proof that a great plot and sensational combat needn't be strangers. Coolest game on PS2? Damn right it is.

CLASSIC VERDICT

Why now? With *Stranglehold* around the corner, it's worth reminding yourself who got there first.
Final thought Massively playable and exceptionally engaging – *Max Payne* stands up as an enduring classic.

The Top 5

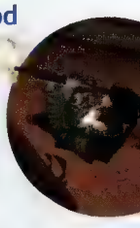
Max Payne quotes

1 He likes to make people mad
"He had a baseball bat, and I was tied to a chair. Pissing him off was the smart thing to do."

2 It's best not to piss Max off
"I had a bullet with Nicole Horne's name on it. I had *ten thousand* bullets with the hag's name on them."

3 Max can be a bit downbeat
"I'd have laughed, if I could have remembered how."

4 Death is exquisite
"The bullet holes were rubies on her chest, blood glowing on her ivory skin. She was so beautiful."



5 Pretension is good
"After Y2K the end of the world had become a cliché. But who was I to talk, a brooding underdog avenger alone against an empire of evil out to right a grave injustice. Everything was subjective. There were only personal apocalypses. Nothing is a cliché when it's happening to you."

PLAYSTATION NATION

PS3 ad campaign launches in style

Louis Pattison

A fiery Latino couple whose kinky mating games spill over into a Bonnie and Clyde-style killing spree. A hard-headed Chinese warrior-monk, meditating silently in his room. A footballer making distinctly apathetic love to a beautiful woman, as he explains he can only achieve sexual satisfaction from the beautiful game. A girl on the toilet. A suited, booted black man dancing on a table to Shirley Ellis' Northern Soul classic 'Rubber Dolly (The Clapping Song)'. The ad closes with a close-up of his face and the words "This. Is. Living!" No brand. No logo. *Nothing*. Waiting for the heavy artillery of Sony's European PS3 campaign to explode into life? You may already have been struck by an opening burst without even noticing.

Upservice Frisky Latino, Lucia, notable for feats of outdoor sexual congress. Hands a bit shaky, mind.

Developed in collaboration with the British branch of advertising company TBWA, PS3's This Is Living campaign is a chaotic, initially bewildering cocktail of bizarre characters, post-Tarantino violence, black comedy and naked women. Designed to portray PS3 as a "living, evolving entity", the aim is you'll catch a commercial or stumble across an ad online, and follow the content to Sony's This Is Living webspace, a hotel you can explore to uncover a stack of exclusives including online games and PSP downloads.

"It's going to live in cinema trailers, it's going to live in TV, a lot of the more exotic material is going to find its way to arthouse screens," explains Tony McTear, This Is Living's Creative Director. "The bulk of the budget is TV and cinema, but the bulk of the content is online." It couldn't be more different from the US PS3 push. "The US campaign reflects their audience," explains Tom Morton, TBWA's Head of Planning. "It's more product based, it reflects their fanboy culture. But the way we've approached PS communication in the last four years has been about moving away from a gaming world, where it's really between us and Xbox, into a bigger entertainment world." Some next level ambitions, then. Is this living? You be the judge.

Table dancing The hotel's sharp-suited concierge, Bubba. Best carry your own bag, eh?

Slap head Trigger-happy madman Kovac, with the philosophical delivery of Eric Cantona. Er, yes.

"A footballer making distinctly apathetic love to a beautiful woman"

Marilyn mansion This is the hotel where it all happens - [illegible]? Eh?

Snooze this? Washed-up gameshow host, Bruce, living in a whirl of gin and TV fantasies.

Around the world

The days in which a games console is advertised with actual game footage are long gone, regardless of where in the world you live. This is because Sony don't want you to think of PS3 as a games console, but as a 'lifestyle product'. Cue global saturation by bafflingly postmodern ads. See them on YouTube (search for "Japan PS3 commercial" and "US PS3 commercial). Be confused.

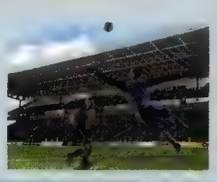
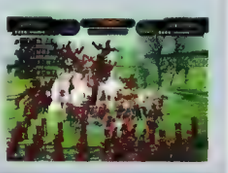
Who's that girl? The Euro PS3 ad campaign is as peculiar as around the rest of the world. At least it's entertaining.

Stone the crows The US got the famed crying baby, and some crows. Obviously.

Fork off Its a woman looking at a fork. What do you mean, "What's this got to do with PS3?"

ON THE DISC
Check out the PS2 reviews section for the latest games

PS2 Playlist

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
SHOOT-EM-UPS	**GRADIUS V** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Treasure | **Web** konami.com "Quite possibly the hardest game in the world. *Gradius* is pure, concentrated frustration." **PSM3 Rating** 83% 	**STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER** **Pub** Activision | **Dev** LucasArts | **Web** lucasarts.com "A little too brief, but there's enough variety in the landscapes and missions to stop you feeling bored." **PSM3 Rating** 80% 	**TWISTED METAL: BLACK** **Pub** SCEA | **Dev** Incognito | **Web** playstation.com "The driver AI is superbly engineered. The survival instincts of the opposition will amaze you." **PSM3 Rating** 80%
BEAT-EM-UPS	**SOUL CALIBUR II** **Pub** Namco | **Dev** Namco | **Web** soulcalibur.com "You can pull off highly impressive moves without memorising long sequences. A great fighting game." **PSM3 Rating** 93% 	**TEKKEN 5** **Pub** Namco | **Dev** Namco | **Web** tekken5.namco.com "It's faster. It's nastier. It's 'blink-when-you're hit' gruesome stuff where you pay big for mistakes." **PSM3 Rating** 91% 	**HYPER STREET FIGHTER 2** **Pub** Capcom | **Dev** Capcom | **Web** capcom.com "Every button press has an effect, every risk brings glorious reward or ignominious failure." **PSM3 Rating** 89%
STRATEGY/ MANAGEMENT	**LMA MANAGER 2006** **Pub** Codemasters | **Dev** Codemasters | **Web** codemasters.co.uk "If you fancy updating your team after the transfer window, *LMA* gives you an online option. A superb idea." **PSM3 Rating** 85% 	**THE SIMS** **Pub** EA | **Dev** Maxis **Web** thesims.ea.com "Mum leaves clothes everywhere, soils herself, plays rap music and refuses to do any cleaning." **PSM3 Rating** 85% 	**KESSEN III** **Pub** Koei | **Dev** Koei | **Web** koei.co.uk "There's a real sense of scale and the battlefield feels alive with movement and mass conflict." **PSM3 Rating** 82% 
SQUAD SHOOTER	**FREEDOM FIGHTERS** **Pub** EA | **Dev** Io Interactive **Web** freedomfighters.ea.com "You develop enormous trust in your group, who defend and attack intelligently." **PSM3 Rating** 92% 	**SOCOM 2: US NAVY SEALS** **Pub** SCEA | **Dev** Zipper | **Web** socom2.playstation.com "Submerge into a silent world far deeper, and arguably more entertaining, than *Metal Gear Solid 2*." **PSM3 Rating** 90% 	**CONFLICT DESERT STORM 2** **Pub** SCi | **Dev** Pivotal | **Web** conflict.com "If you favour the gritty realism of genuine modern war scenarios, get this." **PSM3 Rating** 85%

Dullards Pointless pastimes pointlessly digitised

MAFFS

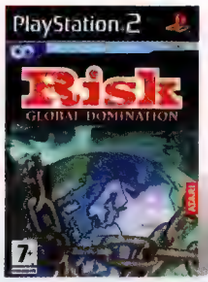
Go! Sudoku

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sumo Digital
Web www.sudoku.org.uk
Yes, all the thrills of, erm, numbers and adding – now available on PSP! (and, when you get one, on PS3 via the Store.) A Sudoku mag would be cheaper and more portable, mind. We can only conclude people bought it for the firework effect when you fill a box.
PSM3 Rating 60%

SPODS

A-Train 6

Pub Midas | **Dev** ArtDink
Web midasinteractive.com
Surely the fun of train sets is in actually handling the trains yourself? OK, *A-Train 6* offers some resource management gubbins as well, but still... at least you don't have to spend hours clearing it all away afterwards.
PSM3 Rating 60%



BORED GAME

Risk: Global Domination

Pub Atari | **Dev** Cyberlore
Web atari.com
Yes, the tactical, territory-grabbing, (and quite tedious) boardgame, converted to PS2. *Risk* against the computer? You can insert *that* idea up your chuffhole sideways.
PSM3 Rating 40%

@ Disagree with our choices? Write us an explosive mail telling us why we're complete idiots. Lob your word bombs at psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "WRONG!"

Back issues
Complete your collection!
Ring our hotline on 0870 837 4773

Why didn't anyone buy...?

They released it... No-one bought it. We explain

I-Ninja

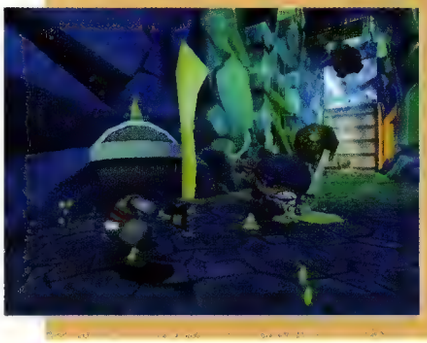
Pub Sony | **Dev** Namco
Web i-ninja-game.com

"You want some more? Then *have* some more!" As battle cries go, I-Ninja's fearless holler is one of the most memorable in gaming. Not, sadly, that it's one you've probably ever heard before.

I-Ninja is one of PlayStation 2's best platformers, but in a market dominated by *Jak*, *Ratchet* and, to a lesser extent, *Sly Raccoon*, it's not one that many people ever picked up in the shop. And it's a much more old-school experience than most others – no massive horizon-spanning worlds here... it's just you, bite-sized levels, a load of platforms, some baddies and a big sword. But what carries *I-Ninja* is the sheer pace.

He's a nippy little bundle of aggression, I-Ninja, tearing around at a speed that shames most platform stars. Typically, you'll bounce through the door, grind down a rail, smack a few bad guys about, vault up a wall, chuck some shurikens about, sprint up and down a half pipe until you've enough height to land on that distant ledges, dance across some whirling, rotating platforms... and that's just the bog-standard stages. There's lots of variety elsewhere, from the barrel-rolling level to one in which you've got to get to the bomb before its ever-shortening fuse does. There's a heap of things to do, and all in wonderfully digestible chunks. Think you've experienced all the decent platformers there are on PS2? You want some more? Then *have* some more.

EMAIL PSM3 @
Want to champion a game here? Let us know psm3@futurenet.co.uk



PlayStation 2 Top 20

This month's big retail winners and losers

Want it? Tick it!

01	(02)	Pro Evolution Soccer 6 — Konami **Reviewed PSM79** 91%	☐
02	(05)	Need For Speed Carbon — EA **Reviewed PSM82** 82%	☐
03	(08)	Scarface: The World Is Yours — VU Games **Reviewed PSM81** 89%	☐
04	(04)	Lego Star Wars 2 — Eidos **Reviewed PSM82** 91%	☐
05	(03)	FIFA 07 — EA **Reviewed PSM80** 84%	☐
06	(09)	Smackdown 2007 — THQ **Reviewed PSM82** 80%	☐
07	(01)	World Snooker Championship 2007 — Reviewed PSM83 80%	☐
08	(10)	Buzz: The Big Quiz — Sony **Reviewed PSM68** 74%	☐
09	(07)	Buzz: Junior Jungle Party — Sony **Reviewed PSM80** 68%	☐
10	(06)	Call Of Duty 3 — Activision **Reviewed PSM82** 88%	☐
11	(11)	Guitar Hero 2 — Red Octane **Reviewed PSM82** 92%	☐
12	(12)	Happy Feet — Midway **Reviewed PSM82** 60%	☐
13	(13)	Tony Hawk's Project 8 — Activision **Reviewed PSM83** 74%	☐
14	(17)	The Sims 2: Pets — EA **Reviewed PSM82** 53%	☐
15	(14)	Splinter Cell: Double Agent — Ubisoft **Reviewed PSM81** 85%	☐
16	(16)	Millionaire: Party Edition — Eidos **Reviewed PSM82** 61%	☐
17	(20)	Eragon — Sierra **Reviewed PSM83** 70%	☐
18	RE	Kingdom Hearts 2 — Square Enix **Reviewed PSM80** 94%	☐
19	(19)	Buzz: The Sports Quiz — Sony **Reviewed PSM81** 69%	☐
20	(15)	Cricket 07 — EA **Reviewed PSM83** 79%	☐

Don't need the speed

Need For Speed Carbon is still selling well, despite not being all that different from previous outings. This is a really dull chart. Buy some different games, people.

Front of the cue

Ah, another update of a game that never changes much. We didn't realise you were all into snooker that much. We'll stick with *PES*, though.

The quiz biz

Oh, look, Christmas is long gone. Can you all stop buying *Millionaire*? We're bored of *Buzz*'s perpetual chart presence too. Man, we're grumpy this month...

10,000,000

The number of copies of *Kingdom Hearts* games sold worldwide across all formats.

You're playing...

Thomas Parkhill
Who says *GTA* inspires violence among the young...?

1 **Brian Lara Cricket** "To right the wrongs of our Ashes defeat."
2 **GTA: San Andreas** "Me and my brother compete to see how many people we can kill with a chainsaw without police attention..."
3 **Midnight Club 3** "I always thought this was better than the *Need For Speed* games."

We're playing...

Andy Kelly
Andy's taken to playing games he doesn't like. Hmm...

1 **Silent Hill 4: The Room** "It's hard, it's depressing and isn't very good, but the story keeps me hooked."
2 **We Love Katamari** "I still have about 10 of those elusive cousins to find. And I *will* find them all."
3 **Okami** "I'm about five hours from the end, which is sad. But I'll probably play it all over again."

They're playing...

Bogdan Bridinel
Creative Director on Ubisoft's plane-'em-up, *Blazing Angels*.

1 **Guitar Hero 2** "The only game in my collection that all my friends wanted – no, *needed* – to play."
2 **Call Of Duty 2** "Sometimes tries too hard to show you all the cool stuff, but then it does have lots."
3 **Blazing Angels** "I know, a cliché: the developer who enjoys playing the game he's working on..."

ON THE DISC
Want to see the latest PSP games rated? Go here

PSP Playlist

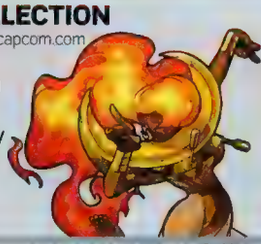
FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE

BEAT-'EM-UPS

TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION
Pub Sony | **Dev** Namco
Web tekken.net
"Grabs you and doesn't let go. This is how all handheld scrapping should be. An essentialy buy."
PSM3 Rating 89%

71%

POWER STONE COLLECTION
Pub Capcom | **Dev** Capcom | **Web** capcom.com
"Slaps a broad smile on your face. Perfectly suited to handheld play and will brighten up anyone's day."
PSM3 Rating 86%



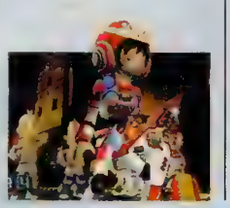
74%

DEF JAM: THE TAKEOVER
Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **Web** ea.com
"Where other fighting games fee floaty, every punch and stomp carries weight. Brutal."
PSM3 Rating 85%

84% 85% 77%

OOBBALL

GITAROO MAN LIVES!
Pub Koei | **Dev** Koei | **Web** koei.co.uk
"A rhythm action game with all the visual flair of a Japanese anime and the most eclectic soundtrack ever."
PSM3 Rating 90%



65%

EVERY EXTEND EXTRA
Pub Q Entertainment | **Dev** Bandai
Web everyextendextra.com
"You play a bomb. Blow up everything in your radius and get combos for massive points. Very good indeed."
PSM3 Rating 83%

72%

ME AND MY KATAMARI
Pub EA | **Dev** Namco
Web katamari.namco.com
"There are few experiences like rolling a sticky ball over a flock of penguins."
PSM3 Rating 81%

RPG/ STRATEGY

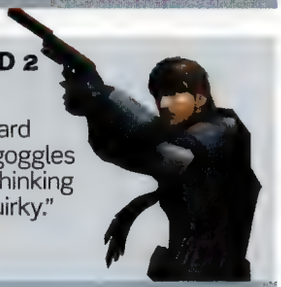
METAL GEAR SOLID: PORTABLE OPS
Pub Konami | **Dev** Kojima Studios **Web** konami.com
"A compromised imitation of a classic, but easily one of PSP's best single-player games yet."
PSM3 Rating 83%

74%

FIELD COMMANDER
Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Sony Online
Web fieldcommander.station.sony.com
"You get a real sense of achievement as your gang of upstarts turns the tables on your overwhelming foe."
PSM3 Rating 82%

77%

METAL GEAR ACID 2
Pub Konami | **Dev** Konami
Web konami.com
"Tactical Japanese card game with a pair of goggles to fool the eye into thinking the game is in 3D. Quirky."
PSM3 Rating 80%



80%

SHOOTERS/ SHOOT-'EM-UPS

KILLZONE: LIBERATION
Pub Sony | **Dev** Guerilla | **Web** killzone.com
"The FPS has been ditched for a friendly 3D set-up. A massively enjoyable blaster that suits PSP perfectly."
PSM3 Rating 85%

77%

SOCOM: FIRETEAM BRAVO
Pub SCEE | **Dev** Zipper | **Web** socom-game.com
"*Fireteam Bravo* not only looks lush on the tiny screen, it handles like a dream as well. A seamless experience."
PSM3 Rating 83%

79%

ACE COMBAT X
Pub Sony | **Dev** Namco | **Web** acecombatgame.com
"Plenty similar to recent PS2 efforts, but the multi-player side makes it well worth a look."
PSM3 Rating 80%

78%

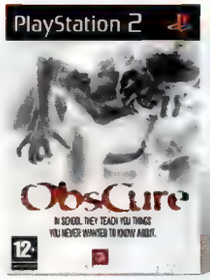
Cool schools PS2's top educational establishments

TOUGH

Canis Canem Edit
Pub Rockstar | **Dev** Rockstar
Web rockstargames.com/bully
Bullworth Academy's easily the most famous of all PlayStation 2's halls of academia. There's hours of fun kicking in the other kids (only if they deserve it, mind...), playing football, lip-locking the ladies (and the lads) and even going to lessons.
PSM3 Rating 93%

RUDE

Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude
Pub VU Games | **Dev** High Voltage
Web leisuresuitlarry.com
Don't be jealous of Larry's wild uni days. Sure, there are lots of 'willing' ladies, but we wouldn't fancy having our brains swapped with a monkey. Or a half hour of loading every time we went into a room.
PSM3 Rating 80%



HORRIFYING

Obscure
Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Ubisoft
Web ubi.com
Leafmore High is like a typical US teen movie school – jocks, nerds, prom queens and so on. A shame, though, about the hordes of ugly, vicious monsters hiding all over the place. We wouldn't send *our* kids there. Underrated survival horror.
PSM3 Rating 80%

@ **Disagree with our choices?** Write us an explosive mail telling us why we're complete idiots. Whatever. Send your word bombs at: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "WRONG!"

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Nice Apps

Trick up your console

Blue is the colour

App Metallic blue PSP faceplate
Web divineo.co.uk

OK, so it's just another faceplate for your PSP, but this official Sony one is one of the coolest we've seen to this day – a sharp and shiny metallic blue that's slicker than a greased eel. Certainly it's a more than decent alternative to your boring old black handheld. There's also another one available in silver, but this one is by far our favourite. The asking price may seem a little steep, but you can't scrimp on fashion, can you? Unless you shop at Oxfam, like we do. Anyway, all we need now are some PSP games that are as cool as this faceplate and we'll be happy..

Full power

App Rechargeable PSP battery
Web gameseek.co.uk

Tired of your PSP running out of battery six minutes into a five-hour train journey, forcing you to stare out the window or even – shock – read a book? Can't have that. So try this: the Exspect (real spelling) Recharge 4, which is a reusable battery that charges up your PSP four times before you'll need to charge the battery itself. And it's got a little display that shows you how much power is left in it. Yes, that's the sort of fact we'd only resort to if we were desperately short of interesting info. Anyway, this is certainly a handy gadget.

Willing and cable

App Four-way multi-component cable
Web totalconsole.com

Got a PS2? You probably do. Got a PS3? Hopefully you will soon. Got a Wii and an Xbox 360? Then you've got far too much money. But if so, you might be interested in this – the XCM XFPS multi-component cable, which connects all four of your consoles to your TV at once, allowing you to change between them at the flip of a switch. Mind you, if you connect this to your PS3, you're running it through component – not a hi-def über-connection. Which is a bit daft, isn't it?

Cable, guy? Connect all your consoles to your TV with this.

Early Warning System

Your PlayStation release schedule

Want it? Tick it!

Game	Publisher	Out	Format	
Sid Meier's Pirates	2K Games	March 16	PSP	☐
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Activision	March 16	PSP	☐
PlayStation 3 out in UK	Sony	March 23	PS3	☐
MotorStorm	Sony	March 23	PS3	☐
Resistance: Fall Of Man	Sony	March 23	PS3	☐
Ridge Racer 7	Sony	March 23	PS3	☐
Elder Scrolls 4: Oblivion	Ubisoft	March 23	PS3	☐
F.E.A.R.	VU Games	March 23	PS3	☐
Def Jam Icon	EA	March 23	PS3	☐
The Godfather: Don's Edition	EA	March 23	PS3	☐
Call Of Duty 3	Activision	March 23	PS3	☐
Genji: Days Of The Blade	Sony	March 23	PS3	☐
Splinter Cell: Double Agent	Ubisoft	March 23	PS3	☐
Brian Lara Cricket 2007	Codemasters	March 23	PS2	☐
UEFA Champions League 2007	EA	March 23	PS2	☐
Burnout Dominator	EA	March 23	PS2	☐
Call Of Duty 3: Roads To Victory	Activision	March 23	PSP	☐
Virtua Tennis 3	Sega	March 23	PSP	☐
Dungeons And Dragons Tactics	Atari	March 23	PSP	☐
Driver '76	Ubisoft	March 23	PSP	☐
Virtua Fighter 5	Sega	March 30	PS3	☐
God Of War 2	Sony	March 30	PS2	☐
Medal Of Honor: Vanguard	EA	March 30	PS2	☐
Championship Manager 2007	Eidos	March 30	PSP	☐
The Fast And The Furious: Tokyo Drift	EA	March 30	PS2	☐
Ape Escape: Million Monkeys	Sony	March 30	PS2	☐
Ratchet And Clank: Size Matters	Konami	March 30	PSP	☐
After Burner	Sega	March 30	PSP	☐
Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2	Ubisoft	March 30	PSP	☐
Free Running	Ubisoft/Reef	April 7	PS2	☐
Hard Rock Casino	Crave	April 20	PSP	☐
SOCOM: Fireteam Bravo 2	Sony	April 20	PSP	☐
Manhunt 2	Rockstar	May 11	PS2	☐
Dave Mirra BMX Challenge	Crave	May 25	PSP	☐
Tomb Raider Anniversary	Eidos	May 25	PS2	☐
Lost: The Game	Ubisoft	June 1	PS2	☐
Rogue Galaxy	Sony	June 8	PS2	☐
Army Of Two	EA	June 29	PS3	☐
The Darkness	2K Games	June 29	PS3	☐
Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops	Konami	Sep 7	PSP	☐

Elder Scrolls 4: Oblivion

There's not necessarily much for the more thoughtful gamer in the PS3 launch line-up. This brilliant, infinity-length RPG ought to suffice, mind you.

Burnout Dominator

See page 80 for our review of this – just another *Burnout* it may be, but another *Burnout* is always worth getting excited about. Or is it? Read on...

Tomb Raider Anniversary

It's Lara's first game, reworked for PS2 – and should be another of a batch of cracking farewell titles for PS2. What a way to go, eh?

eBay Going, Going, Gone PlayStation auction action

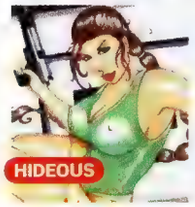
Dante from *DMC* cap

Advertised as a trucker's cap, this. Now, trucking is the most manly job in the world – a massive rig, the open road, honking your horn, discussing oil sump levels with other truckers over fry-ups at roadside caffs... ace. The effect might be spoilt, though, by wearing a hat starring gaming's most homoerotic character... with his shirt off. Insanity.

Sold No **Original Price** $0.01
Profit None

Porny Lara Croft artwork

Erm... Jesus. This is a 'reimagining' of Lara drawn by professional comic book artist Jessi Nelson, who's drawn for titles such as Arcana Studio's Ezra, which we'll confess to knowing little about. You're probably imagining Jessi as some dribbling, over-testosteroned hobbit, but in fact she's a woman. A mental one. Still, it takes all sorts. Unfortunately.



Sold $6.49 **Original Price** $5.99
Profit $0.50

Awful Mortal Kombat mask

It's not Halloween, but looking at this mask makes us think it should be. It's a hand-painted latex mask of Sub-Zero's face. The seller tells us it's "a freat piece", displaying as heroically casual a manner to English as he does to facial adornments. He also says if we have questions, we should "feel free to hit me up". We've only got one question, though: who the hell would ever want this? It gives us the *fear*.

Sold $39.00 **Original Price** $39.00
Profit None

ON THE DISC
See what PS3 is capable of on your free DVD

PS3 Playlist

FIRST CHOICE | SECOND CHOICE | THIRD CHOICE

TOP THREE

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Insomniac
Web us.playstation.com
"An incredibly slick, exciting PS3 showcase. A beautiful vision of an alien-infested Britain. Terrific stuff."
PSM3 Rating 90%

CALL OF DUTY 3
Pub Activision | **Dev** Trayarch
Web callofduty.com
"The only additions PS3 offers above the PS2 game is shinier, sharper graphics. Still, the next-gen starts here."
PSM3 Rating 89%

MOTORSTORM
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Evolution
Web motorstorm.com
"Tough, dynamic racing. A blistering thrill ride that makes good on all of PlayStation 3's promises."
PSM3 Rating 88%

FOUR TO SIX

VIRTUA FIGHTER 5
Pub | Sega | **Dev** AM2
Web sega.com/vf5
"Perhaps the best scrapper ever, but *VF5* is *such* an acquired taste. Still, technically this is flawless."
PSM3 Rating 87%

VIRTUA TENNIS 3
Pub | Activision | **Dev** Neversoft
Web sega.com
"No online play, but still the best multi-player game on PS3. A must-buy for *Virtua Tennis* fans everywhere."
PSM3 Rating 85%

TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8
Pub | Activision | **Dev** Neversoft
Web tonyhawksproject8.com
"A solid, back-to-basics return to the glory days of the Hawk. He's still delivering the goods."
PSM3 Rating 80%

SEVEN TO NINE

RIDGE RACER 7
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Namco
Web ridgeracer7.net
"The ultimate *Ridge* – glowing with power and delivering exactly want you want."
PSM3 Rating 80%

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3
Pub | EA | **Dev** EA
Web easports.com
"Fundamentally no different to the PlayStation 2 game, but worth it if you're new to *Round 3*."
PSM3 Rating 78%

MARVEL: ULTIMATE ALLIANCE
Pub | Activision | **Dev** Raven
Web marvelultimatealliance.com
"Lets the power of PS3 slip through its fingers, but pretty much essential if you're a Marvel fan."
PSM3 Rating 78%

TEN AND ELEVEN

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER
Pub | Sega | **Dev** Sega
Web wsc2007.sega-europe.com
"The same as the PS2 game. Excellent fun, but *World Champ Snooker* looks absolutely *shocking*."
PSM3 Rating 74%

GENJI: DAYS OF THE BLADE
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Game Republic
Web us.playstation.com
"*Genji* isn't rubbish, but it's not that good either. And that's not what you're getting a PS3 for, is it?"
PSM3 Rating 60%

PSM3'S MOST WANTED
ASSASSIN'S CREED
Pub | Ubisoft | **Dev** Ubisoft
Web assassinscreed.uk.ubi.com
This time-travelling assassinate-'em-up looks like one of PlayStation 3's best games yet. More details very soon.

AVOID

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: TARGET IN SIGHT
"This is one of the worst games we've played for ages. A disgrace on pretty much every level."
PSM3 Rating 28%

FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES
"A budget PlayStation 2 game wearing its big sister's high-definition make-up. Stick to *Burnout*."
PSM3 Rating 36%

FORMULA ONE CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION
"Find Formula One dull? Judging by this, the drivers aren't having any fun either..."
PSM3 Rating 48%

Top Cats Some of PS2's feistiest felines

AWWWWWW

Hello Kitty: Roller Rescue
Pub Xplosiv | **Dev** XPEC
Web hello-kitty.com
PS2's most basic of kids' games – it's about as challenging as a completed wordsearch – is rescued by its cutest character. Face it, not hating Kitty would be like hating *your own newborn baby*. Maybe.
PSM3 Rating 59%

ARTISTIC

Fur Fighters
Pub Acclaim| **Dev** Bizarre Creations
Web wikipedia.org/wiki/Fur_Fighters
Fluffy animal-based shooter *Fur Fighters* features Claude The Cat (geddit? *Geddit?*) as a level boss. Claude is an artist and sculptor. If more cats spent their time similarly, perhaps we'd spend less time cleaning up their cat-vom.
PSM3 Rating 86%

DERIVATIVE

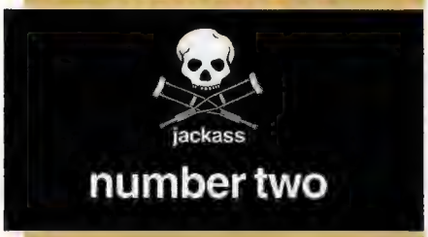
Legend Of Kay
Pub JoWood | **Dev** Neon Studios
Web legend-of-kay.com
When you think of animals in games, of course, you're never far away from a platformer cut from the 'Genero Ratchet Rip-Off' template. Hence Kay: he's a cat! He does martial arts! He lives in a forest! We don't care! Go away!
PSM3 Rating 69%

Got a PS3 question? Then we'll answer it. Send your next-gen console queries to: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "PS3 question!"

Now Showing

Movies for your consolin

DVD New on DVD



Jackass: Number Two

Director Jeff Tremaine | **Starring** Johnny Knoxville, Bam Margera, Steve-O, Chris Pontius, Ryan Dunne

You could view this as postmodern, 21st-century circus with each stunt depicting a biting critique of the human condition. Or you could simply think of it as grown men acting the twat for your amusement. Either way, we like.

UMD selection

Casino Royale

Director Martin Campbell | **Starring** Daniel Craig, Eva Green, Mads Mikkelsen, Judi Dench

There's something of a reprieve for UMD this month, with a mini-glut of new releases – of which Casino Royale is the undoubted highlight. You all know about Casino Royale by now, of course: Daniel Craig plays Bond and isn't crap, as had been expected. In fact, he's pretty damn excellent and this is one of the darkest, edgiest Bonds there's been in a very long time. When the chips are down, this is definitely worth a gamble. And so on.

Blu-ray choice

XXX

Director: Rob Cohen | **Starring** Vin Diesel, Asia Argento, Marton Csokas, Samuel L Jackson

OK, it's not the most intellectual movie there's ever been, but XXX's extreme sports action set-pieces ought to look as crisp as bacon on your shiny new Blu-ray player. For those not in the know, XXX sees Vin Diesel playing an extreme sportsman recruited by the US government as a spy to infiltrate an underground Russian crime ring. Obviously. The whole thing's ludicrous and stupid, but worth flicking your brain's off switch for.

PSM3 Tunes Where you get great music for free

Sticks And Stones
The Pierces

OK, so these two girls are kind of a bit folky, but in a good way. The Strokes like them, so they must be cool, right? Right?

Get it: myspace.com/thepierces

Album Megamix
The Cooper Temple Clause

This, as the title suggests, isn't a song – instead, it's a mix of clips from every song on the Coopers' new album, Make Your Own. And it rocks.

Get it: clickmusic.com/downloads/myto.mp3

No Emotion
Idlewild

A website-exclusive mix, this one. Idlewild's droney Scottish tones sound a bit odd over a '70s disco sample replete with 'whoo-aa-ooh's, but it just about works.

Get it: idlewild.co.uk

That's All Lies
Jet

If you've only ever heard five seconds of Jet's music before, you know what this sounds like: clunky, thunky, meaty geetar-rock.

Get it: 7digital.com

Sadie (live)
Alkaline Trio

Storming rock from one of America's best – although bleakest – bands. Sounds quite upbeat, this one, but all the references to blood, knives and psychiatric wards kind of suggest otherwise...

Get it: alkalinetrio.org/audio.php

I Wish I Could See You Soon
Herman Dune

Don't let the bongos put you off this ultra-laid back, mellow tune.

Get it: myspace.com/therealhermandune

@ Tune-up Send us your music links and we'll stick 'em in the mag. Email: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "Music"

Object of Desire

Aggressively priced 1080p plasma, but it's still gorgeous

Pioneer PDP-5000EX Massive new telly

Yep, it's another TV, but now PlayStation 3's almost here, we thought we'd show you what's probably the best HD television money can buy – the world's first 50" 1080p plasma screen. Say hello to the Pioneer PDP-5000EX, everybody.

So, what you get for your six grand (erk) is a huge 50-inch plasma screen with a screen resolution of 1920 by 1080 and it is, according to people paid to know these things, the sharpest image you'll see on any television anywhere.

The PDP-5000EX is pretty good at dealing with old-fashioned standard-def images too, unlike many newer TVs, so you needn't worry about playing your PS2 games on it either. But really, this telly is born to link up with your PlayStation 3. Imagine 50-inch super-crisp *Metal Gear Solid 4, Devil May Cry 3, Assassin's Creed, Oblivion*... the list goes on, and we can only dream what we might see on this TV when PS3 gets into its stride. Can't wait.

Tech Spec

Price £6000
Features HD ready, 1920 by 1080 resolution, 3000:1 contrast ratio
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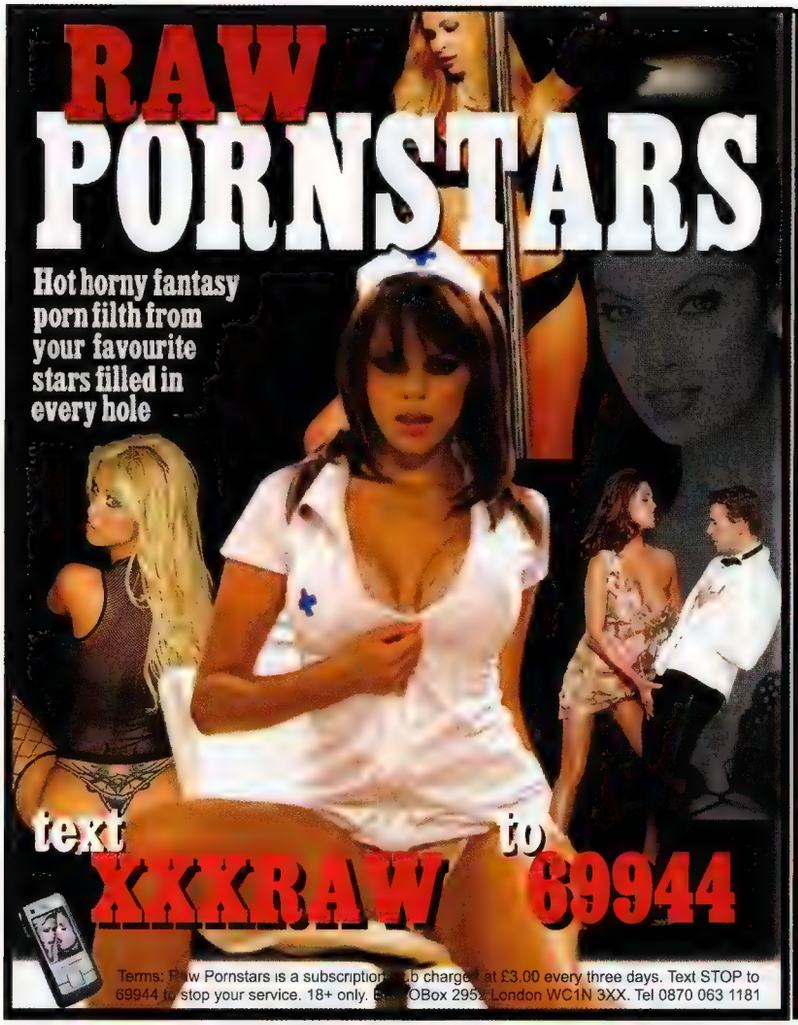
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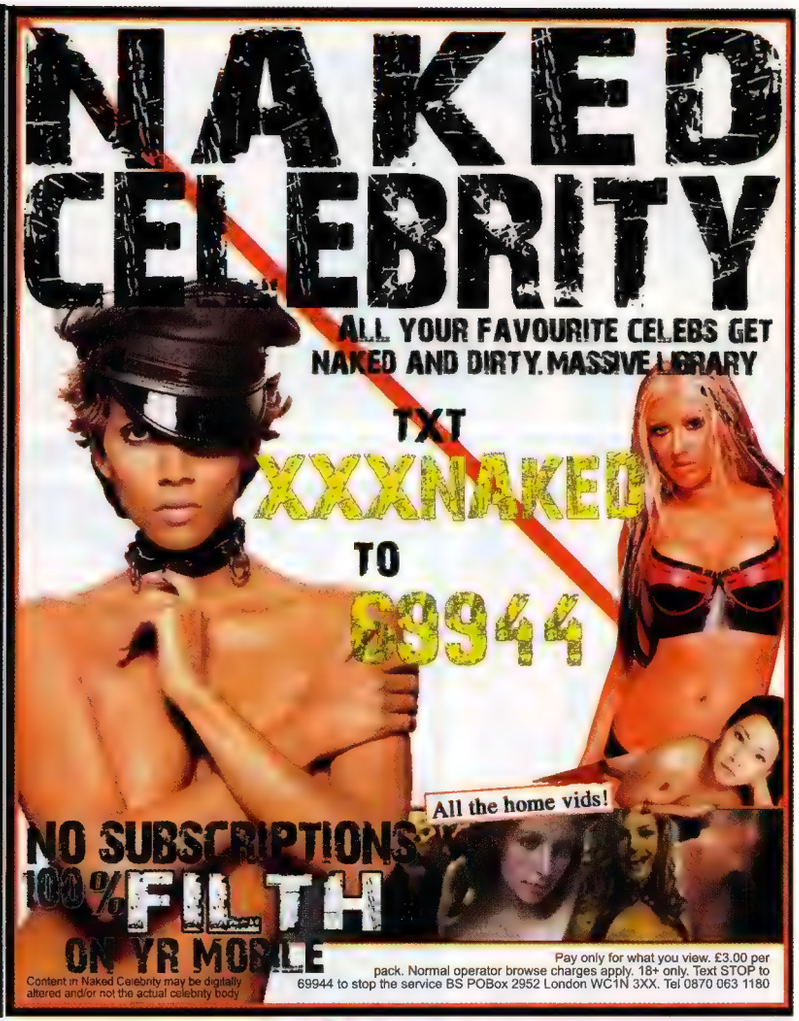
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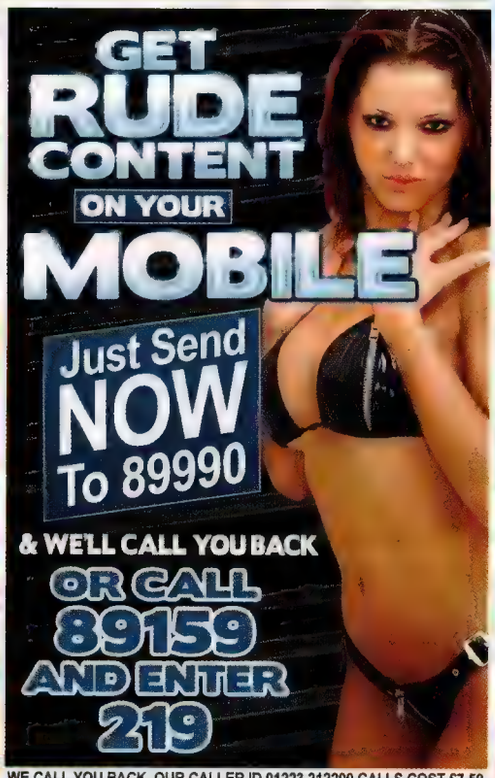
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5 things to remember this month

Super charge your PS3 with Linux
"Linux lets PS3 emulate other consoles' games"
page 44

***God Of War 2* is better than any PS3 game**
"Like running eyes-first at a wall of beauty."
page 62

***Skate* lets you make your own movies**
"Concoct your own demo reel to share with the world."
page 20

***Def Jam* is now much worse than before**
"It's like having Vanilla Ice headlining above Dr Dre and Jay-Z"
page 74

PS3's ad campaign is *bizarre*
"A man on a table. A woman on the toilet. No brand. No logo."
page 100

Next issue on sale
Thursday April 12

1. ***Devil May Cry 4* - exclusive hands-on. Hot from Japan.**
2. *Spider-Man 3* - extensive playtest of Spidey's PS3 debut. First verdict.
3. PSM3 reports live on PS3's future from the Games Developers Conference in San Francisco.
4. It was cancelled - but now it's back: *WWE Smackdown* on PS3 revealed.
5. Killzone 2, Transformers, a *big* GDC surprise and... well, you know, *more*.

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ABC PSM3 26,584
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PS3 ads explained

Don't be confused by PS3's mental global ad campaign – we've used science* to show *exactly* who they're aimed at

IS THIS YOU?

Confused by the PlayStation 3 marketing campaign? Wondering just who they are trying to appeal to with their mind-bending adverts (see page 100)? Well, we've discovered it's the result of exhaustive research into what Sony believe will be the archetypal PS3 early adopter.

Skip below, and feast your eyes on *exactly* who Sony were hoping to appeal to when designing PS3. Spooky? Us too!

WEEPING BABY EYES
To appeal to extra-sensitive gamers that *Gundam* hasn't reached.
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Shaky hands? Blind? Daft? You'll like PS3 as well. Somehow.
THE FORK
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WEIRD BABY HEAD
To appeal to people who are:
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Eating mushed fruit for tea.
GLOSSY LONG HAIR
Like girls? Want a girlfriend? Even though you're sat at home crying and playing PSP? Look at this lady's hair – buying PS3 will be like stroking it. Sort of.
CROWS
To appeal to... er, why were these in the US ads again? Oh, yes. Mystery. Deffo.
SITTING ON A TOILET
Because we all sit on the toliet, right? And if you see it in an ad you might like PS3 more? Er, are we sure we can't use the in-game footage of *Motorstorm*? Right. Fine. Edgy. Got it.
EGGS
Students?

*Yes, we're especially desperate this month. Can anyone send us a, er, joke book, or Hale and Pace DVD or something funnier for next issue? Ta.

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41771	41758	BOOTY LUV	Boogie2Nite
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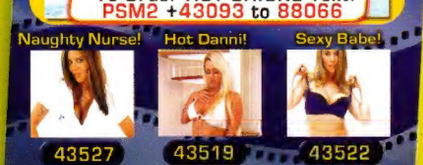

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